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INTELLIGENCE IN EXPRESSION
With an Essay
ORIGINALITY OF THOUGHT
AND ITS PHYSIOLOGICAL CONDITIONS

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INTELLIGENCE IN EXPRESSION

With an Essay

ORIGINALITY OF THOUGHT
AND ITS PHYSIOLOGICAL CONDITIONS

BY
LEONE VIVANTE

Translated by
PROF. BRODRICK-BULLOCK

With Foreword by
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FOREWORD

The new interest in philosophy, which is so distinctive a feature of the intellectual life to-day, is the outcome of an era of scientific research. We have come, not without difficulty, to see that the natural sciences, however triumphant in their practical application, to be complete, and therefore secure, must rest on a sound philosophical basis. Consequently the problem of philosophy is assuming in the modern world a new form and an importance it has never had before. Philosophers are no longer content to speculate on the transcendental origin of the universe, or indulge vague aspirations as to its final end ; they are setting themselves resolutely to the task of interpreting the actuality of existence, the nature and meaning of life, the conditions and limitations of knowledge. If philosophy is still for us the science of God, its object is no longer other-worldliness, but the apprehension of our actual world in its integrality.

Signor Vivante's book which is here presented to the English reader in a translation is an instance of this new interest and new approach to the problem of philosophy.

FOREWORD

The author belongs to the school of thought which is generally indicated by the terms New Idealism, of which the leading representatives are Croce and Gentile. Yet he is not to be ranked as a simple disciple of these philosophers ; he takes a line of his own, and is acutely critical of some of their fundamental positions. He has been largely influenced by his reading of English philosophers, particularly the works of Mr. Bradley and the late Mr. Bernard Bosanquet. He is not himself a teacher of philosophy, nor is he interested in it academically. He writes because he loves philosophizing.

Signor Vivante is only known to me by his book. He sent it to me, I imagine, because he had heard that I was sympathetic to the point of view of Italian idealism. I read his book with enjoyment and sent a short notice of it to the Editor of *Mind*. My review in that journal pleased the author, and he was kind enough to write and express his satisfaction at finding that I had, as he said, singled out the most essential point in his argument and given expression to his main thesis. Since he regards this as of prime importance, I will state in my own words what I take this central conception to be and leave it to readers to study his own presentation of it in the book. It is an application of Croce's theory of art to the larger problem of organic life in its full biological meaning, and especially to the particular philosophical problem of the mind-body relation. It is, in effect, that the neuro-cerebral organization stands to the mind in a similar relation to that in

FOREWORD

which the plastic material an artist uses stands to the artist's intuition, namely, as the essential medium of artistic expression. Apart from criticism and without pointing out the obvious difficulties in the conception, of which difficulties Signor Vivante is fully aware, it is a thesis deserving the careful attention of philosophers. It is true, indeed, that it cannot be claimed for such a view, however interpretative it may be, that the fundamental difficulty of philosophical dualism is overcome, but at least it can be said that the peculiar obstinacy of the mind-body dualism is broken down if it can be shown to be a case in point of the dichotomy which necessarily accompanies the expression of activity.

I have called attention only to one point of interest in the book. The reader will find many others.

H. WILDON CARR.

King's College
London

September, 1924

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INTELLIGENCE IN EXPRESSION

CHAPTER I

THE RELATION BETWEEN CONCEPT AND EXPRESSION IN POETRY AND PROSE

1.—In comparing the prose and verse period it may be noted that in poetic expression the concept is more intensely present in every moment of the expression, and that, on the other hand, the material of the expression is, in a certain sense, an active part in the developing of the concept. These problems, and especially the concept of activity and of the relation between activity and the material of expression, involve all the widest problems of philosophy ; yet it may not be arbitrary first to pursue our research in a more restricted and obvious field, where several observations and considerations may be adduced, which are here collected, and which have (it seems to me) some value both in themselves and as means of seeking the reality of activity and intelligence.

2.—The slightest change in the order of words (or in any other detail of form) in verse destroys all effect, even where the change does not perceptibly affect the metre ; an expression which was full of light becomes cumbersome and ugly ; by a trifling change all beauty, force and truth of expression is lost. Why ? Is it because the word, from its having been anticipated, no longer carries any light

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with it ? or because the phrase, less brief and quick, obscures and hampers what it should reveal ? These reasons exist, but they are slight and certainly do not afford an adequate explanation. Instead, it is clear that the more words are an active part in the developing and varying of the concept, the more every displacement or variation of them is of consequence in the meaning and value of the expression.

Every word—every expressive moment and every element of the material—newly taken up into the activity of thought may afford innumerable concepts—discursive, sonorous, pictorial, etc. But in prose this fecundity, by which every word is called to innumerable kinships or transparencies, is not favoured, either because it is constrained and chastened, or because it is partially lacking ; while in poetry it is most vigorous and stands for what it really is : namely, sensibility and intelligence which can not be substituted. And as in poetry every moment of expression as it takes shape avails itself of, and gives value to, every circumstance, and finds in expression itself, in every preceding moment, material to renew and to unfold the concept and the concepts, it is clear why the position of the words should be of such consequence, and why a trifle should break the delicate web in which they have their significance, take them out of their vital connection and change a living thing into a meaningless one.

3.—The difficulty of translating poetry is well known ; since in the translation the power with which the words were originally born cannot be found again, except in so far as the translator be a poet of the same value and in the same vein and the translation a new poem. But in considering this difficulty more in detail (inasmuch as it is more marked in poetry than in prose) a partial explanation

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may be found in the large share which words, and every expressive element, have in the formation of the concept, in its most delicate variations, naturally diverse according to the diversity of the words—whether longer, lighter, or more sonorous ; whether more used or abused or rare, etc.—which each language affords. For while in the original the concept freely forms itself in expression, and the material in all its richness shares in the concept's development, the translator, on the contrary, generally starts from the concept, having naturally first in mind the meaning, the concept presented to him by the original text ; that is, the concept is the datum from which he starts ; and this is a reason why his words may not have that novelty and freshness, and that *originality* and *truth*, which they have when expression and concept are born together.

4.—In prose the period is more subject to rules, whether in the collocation of words, in the structure of the phrase, or in the use of words ; i.e. it is subject to conventional usage. Uncommon words can hardly be introduced ; it seems wayward and arbitrary to use them, and in general we cannot depart from common usage—while in poetry a like “transgression,” a like inversion or the uncommon use of a word passes, as such, unobserved. And this is due to the boldness which words have in poetry—because their meaning is entirely present, their every reason or value is present and active in them, in every moment of expression ; and because, on the other hand, the very material, as it were, calls forth activity to form itself according to all its intrinsic values and forms and, being one with activity, is itself concept.*

*The concept is the *infinite* of each point of the sensuous material (i.e. a given concept is the *infinite* of a given point of the sensuous

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The meaning is entirely present in the expression, in the first place because reality is not supposed or abstractly inferred. Reality is there, and it is not conceived as the mere existent to which the attributes, qualities, activities, etc. (the "content") are ascribed. The attributes are not extrinsically grouped as pertaining to one supposed permanent basis, and united only in the necessity of space, by a mere connection of inherence or co-existence. Any "attribute" renews the whole matter, according to all self-necessary values and forms of activity; it identifies with itself and renews the whole subject, is the subject. *The logical subject in poetry is typically the content, it is not a (supposed) reality to which a content is attributed.* The actuality of thought is the unsubordinated subject, both existing and acting, of the proposition; hence the fulness, the strong reality of a work of art. Yet it is to be remembered that all the logical schemes of the prose period may probably be found in poetry, and their difference is a secondary one. What makes the difference is the unsubordinated originality of thought in its expression or actuation.

By comparison, prose words are poor, enslaved; no daring is allowed them. On the contrary, in poetry their every subordination* is but the presence of a vaster concept; it is a presence, an identification in the self-necessary or original, an "assuming" ("absorbing") which is essentially of the same nature as love; it is a value present in the act. In poetry they carry within

material). The *infinite* is the *activity*, in so far as in the intrinsicality, or *apriority*, of the original values and forms of knowing, and of life, it identifies the real beyond all given limit. I cannot here treat the subject more in detail and more systematically. See Ch. VIII.

*Between ethical concepts and the concepts of substantial logic there exists an essential or *ex principio* analogy, and not a merely external one. Cf. my *Principles of Ethics*, §§. 22, 61, 67-73.

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themselves their end, and their motive ; and they are not the means, but they are *life which is subject* (activity, novelty.) The words themselves are activity, subject ; not the writer as separate from them. He is assumed in them and is really the subject, but only in so far as he is *identified* with the novelty of the expression. They are not the *means* or *instrument*, in which there is no life or intelligence, and which are only used from without ; nor are they the end, considered abstractly, which an extraneous subject would set up. They are a value, which is an agency, and is both subject and end. The *means* might be the material of expression, yet even that term is not the proper one ; the material of expression is very much more than a means, or instrument, or occasion, or vehicle of expression.

5.—The same essential fact—that expression in verse is not so much formed in view of an independent concept to which all the development is referred and subordinated, but rather expresses a concept which forms itself in part out of the moment of expression just past, i.e. to whose formation this moment yields material and justification—may no less be recognised in another peculiarity of poetic expression. In the poetic period there is a greater variety, well-nigh an extravagance, of ideas, though always in accord with the deeper, more general concept—and the period often proceeds along a path full of turns, ramifications, surprises, which in prose would be intolerable ; frequently, if the strophe is translated into prose, the thread is lost or with difficulty followed. How many detached, uncombined concepts do we find ! For (in a prose version) they are not justified by the demand which is contained not only in the strophe but also in the verse, in the preceding or following word, and which must be a

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living demand, not supposed or abstract, and therefore precisely such as it was at that moment, in that verse, in that strophe. It is not an abstract, supposed, fixed concept which controls the expression, but it is the material itself, as pregnant with significance and teeming with activity. Such material, on the other hand (if we are dealing with true poetry), does not lend itself to be gathered up and renewed in concepts foreign to the more general concept or strain (which exists in that material and not otherwise, and from which the material itself derives in great part its value and reality).

The *continuity* of a work of thought has several causes ; but first of all it is due to this, that the concept *forms itself*, in part, in the material of the past moment of expression. In every fresh moment of expression the past moment is again *concept*, activity. And the more in this way every preceding moment is material to, and (in a certain sense*) operative in the formation of the new moment of expression, the more there is continuity in the work. This is seen in the same way, and very clearly, in painting. Consider a painter who may begin a painting in any part of the canvas, whose every stroke takes no

*It must be remembered that the past moment of expression, in so far as it is past, is not operative ; and since it is, essentially, renewed in the expression, even then it can be said to be "operative" only with some reserve. The *cause*, strictly speaking, is alone the activity of thought (V. Chap. VIII) which only as *new* or *original* is a principle of unity, of spiritual integrity, a need of all values and forms, and an agency. The self-necessary values and abstract forms of activity, which, though eternal, have (as I hold) no reality of any kind except in their expression or actuation, can express or actuate themselves only *originally* ; otherwise they lose that value of *necessity* and of *liberty*, that *value of actuation*, which is the reality of thought, and a self-sustaining reality, a principle of causation ; and any exterior pressure—if not taken again as a "material"—may be only (and indirectly) a hindrance. Any exterior condition, however necessary and influential, cannot really be a cause, it cannot *constitute* thought.

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account of the colours already applied ; a painter who, having divided the canvas and the subject into a hundred parts, will paint each independently and then unite them, so that the re-united parts fit in with one another : such a process may do for a purely photographic picture, or, for instance, in the case of a raised map. The concept I mean is the concept which is formed from the colours successively laid on the canvas. The unique character or unity of the picture may be apart from these, i.e., independent of what has been already painted : yet such a concept arising gradually from the painting, is essential to the picture's life, is reality of thought, whose absence could not be compensated for.

The unity, the unique tone of the picture, is born in the first place from the general subjectivity of the painter, which gradually displays itself and finds itself again in the diversity of things painted ; but this unity largely depends also on the concept, on the infinite concepts, coloristic, plastic and of every kind, which activity forms in the inexhaustible possibilities of the rich material already brought to higher meaning. Not only the continuity of the development but even its profound *objectivity* takes birth from this formation of expression in expression. Where at every point the material, full of significance, is activity, quality, concept, i.e., a principle of limitless identification with itself, there activity most reveals its values and forms as intrinsic, self-necessary, original, "eternal." And here we discover a profound reality, which must be called subjective (though anything but arbitrary,) at once personal and impersonal. In that spontaneity there is a collaboration of activity and wealth of material more than ever intense—(I mean here a material which is already activity, whether we have under

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consideration an element of matter for the more living thought that it expresses and in which that element has reality in that given moment of expression, or whether we think of the poorest thought or sensation in which an element of matter, when detached from a given expression or vision, has yet a sensible reality.)

6.—To express it differently, in poetic thought the “concept” is not an abstract concept, an idea already thought and now supposed (rather than actually thought), a point for reference, a thesis, etc., but is really concept, concrete concept, an infinite of expression itself, of its every moment and element. Likewise “reason” is not—in poetic thought—an end on the one hand, and on the other a will to employ, in the service of that end, appropriate arguments and expressions, but it is a sense of life and truth, in its own infinite identity or transparency, in its universality; in fact it is *activity in as far as of every element of matter it makes a principle of infinite assumption or identification, a principle of integration in every intrinsic value and form of activity itself*. It is a demand that, in so far as it is, is the self-subsistent reality and the cause, is an internal finality, a value of actuation—where subject, end, means, agent, are not to be distinguished; it is not an instrument or an end. It is *objectivity* as a value and an agency, of the same nature as love, as an *essential identity* growing deeper and intenser through every detail and only existing in these very details.

7.—Expression is made valuable, animated, “activated” in every minutest detail, in all its richness, in proportion as activity forms itself in its spontaneity, and “expression” is not a symbol or sign used from without. Whether this is so because in poetic expression there is nothing extrinsic, no reference to anything else, no sign

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without a present, active value (which is the subject, the agent), or because, instead, the liveliness of expression excludes such reference to anything else ; whether the abstract end, the object of the will, excludes poetry, or this fails from its own deficiency, is not easy to say : both causes may be aspects of one and the same attitude. In any case, in poetry the word is as if freed from subjection—whether this happens from its own fulness of life, from the incorporate activity and intelligence, the concentration of the concept in it, or whether its liberty is more easily attained by the absence of less actual conceptions.

And as a man when freed sees his liberty and, by seeing it, all the more strengthens and extends it, in like manner verse frees itself ; and the passage from prose to poetry takes place not according to insensible gradations, but shows a certain disconnection, an unstable point where it is difficult, if not impossible, not to turn to one side or the other. For if the word or the moment of expression attains to a certain degree of immanence—presence and activity—of the concept, of the directing idea, if it guides the verse or rhythmic period, it seems that at the same point it must increase in force and in its very intelligence.

8.—*Rime*. Rime is a salient moment of expression. And we can never see so well as in rime how far the material of expression shares in the formation of the concept.*

In the first place I observe that without this participation rime would be intolerable. Rime, if it be not an active part in this forming of the concept, as it is in verse, is intolerable ; it evidently disturbs the meaning. The same may be said of every metrical element—it

*That is of this or that individual concept. I mean here the particular material used or at our disposal ; I do not here consider the more general problem of the material conditions as necessary for the existence of any mental presentment.

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cannot be there for nothing. I mean that every metrical element, if it be not in a certain sense a cause in the significance, in the particular or general demands which gradually spring up—and all the more, the more it is emphatic—disturbs us as contradictory or extraneous to the concept itself. Hence it is essential that in verse, in far greater measure than in a prose period, the word, which is at once sound and meaning, may share in the forming of the concept and of a thousand concepts—philosophical, moral, plastic, musical, etc. Its heightened value, its material richness, would be otherwise unintelligible, something awkward, not “identified” with the whole, i.e. not born into the simplicity of thought.

Where rime is a cause, a motive, and a gracious gift, full of novelty and revelation, in a passage of inspired poetry, there is, in the full meaning of the words, unity of *reason* and *rime*. But it is evident that this could not be except for the part which rime plays in the forming of concept. To speak more generally, just because the concept is formed gradually in the heart of the matter itself, therefore it is that in art such perfect correspondence of the thought and the material used is possible.

9.—The fact that rime induces to a thought which otherwise (if it were not for rime) would not arise, is not a fault, nay, it is peculiar to real poetry; and it is neither accidental nor secondary. For the word suggested by the rime comes to be in this way, in the forming and developing of thought, something active. Because of the part it plays, inasmuch as it suggests and commands that particular idea or expression of an idea, it must be something active, an acting subject. And, consequently, the spirit rouses itself all the more as originality, and as intelligence. That “the rime precedes the idea” is held to

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be a defect ; but, as I have said, this, in a certain sense, is essential to true poetry, and the accusation, if an accusation is to be made, is not well defined—the defect, if there be one, is not of the rime but of the poetry—and presupposes a disconnection between rime and idea, expression and conception, which cannot be in a strain of real inspiration. For if rime is born as a deeply lived moment it does not lead us astray from the dominant concept, but rather reveals, develops and deepens it. Rime is the salient moment of expression, which bears in itself and concentrates the general tone, i.e. the concept ; it is a moment of conceptional *identification* or *transparency*, notwithstanding the concreteness, violence and exclusiveness of expression. The rime, if the inspiration be deep, will not be extravagant, being formed by the preceding rime and by every proximate expressive moment ; because the material in such expression is too full of the general concept, too strongly affected by the general concept, by the significance—(in that it is transformed, in that it has value and reality), for extravagant concepts to be formed through it. The rime that leads to things extravagant does not proceed from the antecedent rime as from that rime which is expression and therefore full of the concept, but as from a dead thing, or rather from a sound which is considered only in its isolated and impoverished sonorous concept ; or it is only rime in a thought where there is no dominating concept except caprice or playfulness.

The fact that rime does not serve any idea—(the grammarians said that it should serve the idea, and not the idea serve the rime ; both mistaken statements)—but rather anticipates and bears along the idea, is one and the same thing as its liberty, its novelty or freshness, and

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its power of concentration (so that in the rime more than in any other moment of expression the period is recalled and largely realised.) Rime, where it is happiest, is the concreteness in which the sentence culminates, and a presage of truth which, because of the incessant identity of values and forms of knowing and of life, recalls and anticipates, in that very expressive moment, so far as possible, the whole expression, and the whole reality, comprehending and renewing it in the limitless clear unity of the act. The rime is the word no longer used as an instrument, and just for that reason it is, to a greater degree, originality, activity, intelligence. It is the word, intoxicated with liberty (and liberty means the same as activity), which joyously leaps into life, carrying with it the chorus of sounds, the whole range of the expression, the phrase, the thought.

10.—The word is more joyous and proud in rhythm when its reason in rhythm is so strong that it can jest with every other reason or justification. For example :—

Raccomandami al tuo Figliuol, verace
Uomo, e verace Dio ;
Ch' accolga 'l mio—spirto ultimo in pace.

(Petrarch).*

where, according to the sense of the words, if we only abstractly consider their strictly discursive value, there would be no pause at the word “ mio.”

11.—At other times rime is almost an addition . . . But here I refer to rime in its best use, where it has its value, its reason.

* Recommend me to thy Son, true
Man, and true God ;
That he receive my—last breath in peace.

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Rime is best seen in its value when it is not obligatory. So it is in the songs of Leopardi, where we find (in several passages, as I think) that rimes occur more frequently and efficaciously, when thought is more fervid, and longer sustained in a wider range, longer present to itself.

12.—Of course the dominating influence of the word, if this be poor in meaning, if it be formed of little else than sonorous concepts, may lead to excesses which mark an impoverishment of thought. This may occur for instance in the refrain.

13.—Rime, in its best form, will arise therefore where the concept with closer adherence is formed in the expression itself, and where the expression is not subject to any external control. On the other hand in rime we have a most notable unity of material and significance because of the prominence of the material used.

Rime has special qualities of evidence, clearness, concreteness, "certainty"; it is a sharp cut, sure *form*, a moment of individuation and of exclusiveness; at one and the same time the phrase in rime is renewed in a wider reach or appeal; expression discovers remote identities and is therefore a moment of universality; expression is formed in a wider whole, or *transparency*, or identification of the real.

Yet rime consists and has its value essentially in this; that it is the newly found identity of a sonorous and at the same time of a discursive concept, in the diversity of individuations. One sound unites with another in an identity or synthesis which is rime, of which rime is the salient moment. What has reality and value is that absorption or identification, which reveals the intrinsicity of the principle, i.e. the values and abstract forms of activity *as intrinsic* (essential, "eternal," self-necessary,

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original, universal . . . : according as the same reality in different occasions and in not essentially different aspects receives different names).

14.—*Art and Science.* Thus even when the discourse is self-contained and there is in it no reference to anything else, no subordination to an outside end, none the less the peculiar (and also really essential) difference between the poetical period and that of prose, and still more of scientific prose, manifests itself as characterizing the reasoning throughout its course : it manifests itself in an *originality*, or, on the other hand, in an external *discipline* of each word.

If the contrast be carried to the extreme, it may be said that in prose the word does not move, but is moved ; intelligence is almost extraneous to expression. And this has been stated in the preceding paragraphs.

Yet such a difference between art and science or between poetic and prose expression—(such a difference or distinctive character is in the two cases essentially alike) is always something relative, a question of more or less, for if intelligence—that is *activity*, life—were not in the core of expression itself (constituting it, realising itself in it, and developing in it its nature, its infinite possibilities), reasoning would always be a vain effort to place symbols ; it would be an empty reasoning, a reasoning full of errors and dangers, and in the end all reasoning, all putting together of words, would be entirely impossible

Expression is in art :

creatura viva
che gode
del suo mistero
fugace*

(D'Annunzio, *Laudi*, III, *L'Onda*.)

*A living creature which joys in its fleeting mystery.

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But it would be an error to suppose that in science expression is in no way activity, originality, active subject ("a living creature"), but only a means. In science, no less than in art, expression is an experience of thought and life, to which all that is not life is repugnant ; it is activity and intrinsicity. Otherwise, outside of it, where there is no full expression, no living mental presentment, if we construct on given notions, we fall into arbitrariness and error ; indeed, strictly speaking, it is impossible to think.

Every intrinsic difference between artistic, scientific or philosophic thought is, as I hold, only one of degree*. And in the first place the difference of which I have spoken, (essential among them all,) between poetic expression and the prose period, is only one of degree. In all fine prose is not the conception formed together with the expression, is not the former in, and with it, active, inherent, continuous ? Gradually as the conception becomes abstract, supposed, a point of reference, a symbol, a something whose value is not alive in thought ; gradually as a demand that is being lived through, that is activity in its forming, activity in its "eternal" exigencies and values, in its repugnance to all onesidedness, is substituted by an arbitrary act, i.e. a mere empty effort, which aims at being in itself nothing but initiative and at affecting the external world, or in general the will, which is an external activity, a principle of transcendency, which would tend to use words as symbols and means rather than to make them a part of itself ; gradually as *the demand which is satisfied in an unlimited presence is substituted by a will which is satisfied in making one thing serve for another* (where that other thing is a supposition, a

*V. *Principii di Etica*, Parte III, Cap. III.

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symbol, an abstract conception, more or less remote, pale and empty); prose becomes poorer and weaker, whether artistically or scientifically, as light or intuitibility, and as truth.

And so, on the other hand, if any philosopher or other scientist could, without losing any of his objectivity, in the very problems of his science, rise to a wider flight borne by the substance-laden impulse of poetry, life would yield him gifts of profounder and fuller truths, to which otherwise he would not attain. For his concept, his system would then be more strongly present in the expression, implicit or explicit in every given moment of his representations; and, above all, activity *renewing itself according to every intrinsicity of its own*, displaying all its value, *because in a more living originality*, would call forth expression to its highest possibility. In fact, we see also that generally the poet is much truer in his poems than when he philosophises, while yet remaining in the same conception; in the former he expresses truths which, when speaking abstractly, he would not find or would be liable to lose sight of. But as to what is the truth-value of poetic language, this is a subject dealt with in the following chapter.

15.—I have tried then to emphasise the fact that in verse there is a greater adherence of the conception or idea to the material of expression, and that the material is, in a certain sense, something active, participating in the formation and variation of the thought.

In art the material is activity, thought, intelligence, spirit, in a higher grade of intensity; it is not, in any respect, used in its poverty—as where the material is really instrument and not expression, and where it is the “material” in a depreciative sense.

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The true artist, in a certain sense, depends upon and trusts himself to the material—he is material become intelligence.

The true artist is *spiritualised, acting material*.

The painter does not colour the design ; a coloured drawing is not a picture. But in order that painting or colour be justified, the colours themselves must become living, intelligent substances. That is, they must be *activity*, which, in the novelty of the act, displays all its non-ephemeral essence ; thus it is effort, liberty, necessity ; both exclusiveness, violence, of individuation, and infinite identity or *transparence* of meaning ; both material evidence, and oblivion of the material in the reality of the concept (which, however, has no being except in the material), etc.

But I have touched on too many problems, raising, perhaps, doubts and questions. The relation between activity and matter in so far as it is a given, abstract condition (the stimulus) ; the substantiality, by which I mean the ultimate reality, the truth-value of poetic language ; what I more precisely understand as concept, and how more particularly concepts are formed ; in what way is woven, so to speak, the substance of thought, that unlimited transparency, and concreteness, that unity which is of all thought ; what, strictly speaking, is “novelty,” “creation,” and what difficulties this concept meets ; what I mean by the intrinsic values and forms of activity, i.e., of knowing and of life, and what such intrinsicity (or in other terms, originality, universality, eternity) is ; and how the *eternity* of the intrinsic values and abstract forms of knowing and of life is not in contradiction—as I hold—with their absolute temporal and spatial character ; these and other long-standing problems, concerning

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the reality of activity and intelligence, I propose to treat in the following chapters.*

*Concerning rime in relation to poetic inspiration, a book by Auguste Dorchain, *L'Art des Vers*, Nouvelle édition, Paris, 1919, is especially to be noted; as also are several thoughts expressed by Victor Hugo in his poems, and quoted in that book. See also Oscar Wilde: *The Critic as Artist*, Intentions, London, 1913 (7th edition), pp. 102-3 and 200. But generally what one reads is superficial, and false. Strangely inferior to himself on this subject is Guyau. M. Guyau, *Les problèmes de l'esthétique contemporaine*, Paris, 1895; p. 225: "Quant à la rime, comme nous l'avons prouvé, elle n'est scientifiquement que le moyen de marquer la fin du vers; du moment où, grace à elle, la mesure est devenue sensible, son rôle essentiel est terminé." According to Sydney Lanier, *The Science of English Verse* (New York, 1893), rime is, as it were, a thing superposed, it is "the good garment of reason" (p. 296). Hegel says little concerning rime in his *Æsthetics*; except that some reflections in regard to music may be referred to this subject. As to poetic thought in relation to scientific thought cfr. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Aesthetik*, 2nd edition, Berlin, 1842, Part III, pp. 236-273 (Die Poesie. I, Das poetische Kunstwerk im Unterschiede des prosaischen).

CHAPTER II

THE ORIGINAL REALITY OF POETIC THOUGHT

16.—The words of poetry are not something approximate and provisional, nor are they as regards truthfulness inferior to technical words, as is commonly supposed; on the contrary, they are activity itself in its reality, in its original operative values.*

The words of poetry particularly, and in general the language created by the people, the essential words which express activity, as for instance liberty, generosity, will, desire, love, good, bad, etc., are not—who could doubt it—something arbitrary, fictitious, uncertain, conventional (even when first through convention a determined meaning has been attributed to a determined sound); they are not provisional approximations. These words are identical with the spiritual reality they express, which without them *at that given moment* would not exist. It is not enough, nor is it exact, to say that the spiritual reality forms the very words: such a reality creates itself in them; hence they have in this *novelty* an original undervived reality, a value which cannot be substituted and which is adequately expressed. The *novelty* of the *eternal* values of activity—which form themselves in the act, and do not exist (as it seems to me) except in the act (in the individuation, in the expression) though always

*Concerning the “original” or “intrinsic” values of activity, i.e., of knowing and of life, see Ch. IV. and V.

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in conformity with their own intrinsic necessity—constitute the reality of expression ; the values themselves in their *novelty*, in their *originality*, in the act of taking form or expression, are the content, the significance, the sound, the light of words spontaneously created, of words full of truth because full of life.

17.—I refer to words which express activity and are themselves *activity, subject, life*. There are, on the other hand, words formed to designate physical reality, which are however misused to express or define activity, under pretension of more precise language. Take for example, words or expressions such as “ the prolonging,” “ fusion ” or “ interpenetration ” etc., as used in speaking of consciousness ; these words have indeed their first value from activity, from consciousness, but are generally used in reference to external nature or to relations of exterior conditionality. Employed to designate thought, activity, life, they are hybrid words which obscure the representation of activity—because they confound the original activity which really is life and concreteness, with that which is our view of external nature, and therefore in another sense “ concrete,” and with that which is the exactness of abstract conceptions, of things “ *supposed*,” rather than “ *thought*.”

We are led into error by the fact that many words are formed by the consideration of external nature, and when they are referred to consciousness, to activity, they seem to be used as metaphors. But their first source is however always the sense of life, i.e. of activity, in each one of us ; it is consciousness in its intrinsic necessities and values. Therefore, for example, the term *light* is not a figure of speech when applied to the light of thought, any more than if applied to the light of the sun. But the idea that

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only the terms of *things* have precision causes them to be preferred to other terms which abound in common language.

Other words, also called "technical," have an appearance of precision because they are, as it were, propped up by definitions, where every inherent difficulty or problem is lost sight of by being passed on from word to word in puerile fashion ; a concept is placed in relation with others which are given as defined, and upon which curiosity or attention is less aroused ; and in this way all obscurity is removed from the former, though really the problem is only displaced. There are those who see exactness, scientific spirit or value only in these out of place "technical" words. There are those who, if they say, for instance, "sociality," instead of "fellowship," "brotherhood," "charity," "love," think they speak more accurately, nay, that they have solved every problem.

I do not mean here to underrate the advantage of "technical" words ; my object is to emphasise how the philosophic value of poetic and common language may be ignored. Pseudo-scientific words invade, as we all know, certain branches of science and substitute ephemeral theories for deep knowledge. And instead of the words of poets and the language born of the deepest life and genius of peoples, others are preferred (according to a rooted tendency and to a fashion not yet wholly extinct) which have only the appearance of accuracy. These words make indeed a great pretence of rigour, but lose their inflation at once, if they are not kept as idols of the will but are really thought (i.e., identified in the necessity or "eternity" of the intrinsic values and forms of thought).

He who does not see the *originality* which ever creates

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anew the truths of life—and even those of the conditions of life—is inclined to undervalue the words of poetry and those of common language or to pay no heed to them ; as if their strength and their prophetic wealth, their adventurous fate, their formation in every age and place, irrepressible as they are, and all the more rebellious the more they are imagined to be empty sounds which we could set aside or forget, ought not to make us think of their non-ephemeral essence, and ought not otherwise to call our attention to their value. Words have a divine essence, because they are originality, activity ; for their reality is that *novelty*. But this cannot be understood if we do not realise that activity is novelty (see § 24).

18.—And they have the greater value the more they are activity, subject, agent, life, originality. And this is the proper character of poetry.

The more the expression—a word, a phrase, a moment of expression—bears in itself its significance, its justification, the more it relies on no abstract reference, is not subordinate to ends foreign to itself (and in this consists the distinction, though only one of degree, between poetic and scientific language, and also between poetry and prose), all the more the words are themselves activity, subject, origin and intelligence.

For full expression is life ; and there life bestows its truths (original, intrinsic truth, and belonging *ex principio* as well to practical as to theoretical thought) ; and all the more in proportion as the inspiration is a living one. Poetic inspiration is life revealed, and this in its self-necessary, original motives. It is an originality teeming with gifts. Here the thought is life and not “instrumental” to life, and therefore all the more displays its value. Poetic thought reveals the secrets of life in such

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abundance that the philosopher, if he be wise, must look to that before any other field of research. In it are created essential, intimate, necessary words, and in it are found the essential kinships of concepts. Therefore we ought to learn our language from the poets. In their language, if it is life (and such it is, if it is poetry,) we find in abundance the truths we seek, and which philosophy finds again and renews (with different exigencies of unity and responding partially to different problems).

19.—Only when words have a life of their own, that is when they *live*, only when activity is in the expression, and does not *use* the expression (more or less as an instrument), but dwells therein free and active in its original and infinitely necessary values and forms, only then can we believe that words tell the truth. It is then that truths seem to rain down from the eternal source of activity, that is they are an actuation of activity in its original modes (active values and abstract necessities), in whose infinite identity we identify the real beyond every given limit. Therefore I maintain that we are right in holding them true, and that we indeed have the consciousness and the faith of touching reality, of touching truth and the absolute : because they are not arbitrarily formed, but on the contrary they actuate activity in its intrinsic modes ; and on account of *the value of necessity* which they consequently have, it would seem to us most arbitrary or illusory, to attribute them to our own will, as pertaining to our particular and exclusive self. And we are also right because we not only in those values and forms identify (recognise) the real, but those values *constitute* the activity itself, that is, ourselves ; in fact they are something original, something we believe we truly know, because its being consists in our knowing it, i.e., in the act of realising or expressing it.

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When the words are subject (acting subject), full originality, it comes about that the author expresses many more truths than are in his more explicitly conscious intention. And this confirms what has been said: activity in its purest originality actuates itself in those words according to all its internal necessities; and even in far-distant ages thought (activity), when it forms itself anew in those same traces will recognise the primitive synthesis, though taking up into itself new interpretations of new experiences and revealing its meaning as if in new resurrections. On the other hand, the author moved by a profound originality, will have faith in his work; as one who sees an informing principle, informing with itself the variety of relations, not illusory, not created, but creating.

20.—Theory is rarely exempt from error, and the same is true of criticism. And the reason is because when thought becomes more explicit, at the time when we are no longer before a concrete case, which is lived through in all its value, and when there is no living image, the presentment is rarely a real and full one; it rarely has the reality of life. The more explicit thought is, the more it responds to problems not actually and wholly lived, the more difficult, I say, is the lively presentment of these problems—and arbitrariness*, construction, system, take the place of *vision*, and of intelligence. Therefore philosophers and critics err greatly, and so do poets even, when they theorise. The same poet who in his inspired poetry luminously linked love, affections, charity or other forces and values, and saw in them one essentially unique principle, will, when he comes to theoretical analysis, make of

*That is *arbitrium*, in the sense of empty liberty, a liberty having (in so far as it is possible) no internal finality, no internal necessity—that necessity of actuating values and relations which is the reality of thought.

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them so many notions and so many phænomena having no connection one with another. . . . So thought decays when it lacks presentments which live by their own life : that is, when the presentments, where they exist, are put together, displaced, moved from the outside, and become a dead thing ; when they are no longer the acting subject, and do not support by their life and truth the vacant abstract concept, the uncertain or the certain and presumptuous abstract concept.

The theorist must *see* : his theory must be vision, art ; his thought must embody itself (form, express, originate itself) in the integrity of its original and “ universal ” principles, in its spontaneity which certainly cannot be substituted.

Where art begins, whatever in us and in the artist himself is defective and lame at once ceases to be, and we are aware of an unclouded, entire life, all-seeing, all-comprehensive. Thus in the serene verse of Homer even the harsh truths of the prophets are accepted. For (it is well to repeat it) *life* is not a generic term, as may be thought by those who ignore philosophy. Life, thought, intelligence, conscience are essentially activity, which has its intrinsic values and forms, ever new and diverse, and yet identical, and not wholly unknown.

21.—Poetic spontaneity means the prompt forming of activity in every intrinsic value. The value and the reality of such harmonious, integral originality is never so clearly seen as when we chance, for example, to read a poet who in the preface to his verses presents affected conceits, meagre pretexts, ill concealed vanity ; but where poetry begins, there, it seems, life, true life, redeems him. It issues forth like a rushing wind which bears us back to the days of creation—only that the days of

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creation are here and now, though they form themselves and grow powerful on the traces of the past. We find in such a preface (which I suppose as an example) prejudices, artifices, errors, abstract and half ingenuous, half presumptuous theories, in a word, arbitrariness. This means non-*living* or hardly *living*, or—which means the same—hardly *intelligent* presentments ; not moved by an internal force—which is originality itself—but moved for the most part by a will which works from the outside. On the other hand, arbitrariness means a will which in itself is poor and has no value (an empty *initiative*, without any deep spontaneity, being, if anything, a constriction of spontaneity in order to act upon the external world), or, if it has a value, this is hardly seen in the expression, but it rather remains extraneous ; it does not form the expression, i.e., it does not form itself in the expression. But behold ! where there is a limpid strain of poetry we find harmonious life, a welcome accorded to every truth ; no longer arbitrariness, onesided views, and a prolix style ; no longer presumptuous, false humility, ambiguous confessions, etc. ; the words find by themselves a thousand avenues, the deepest and truest conceptional affinities ; “ they reconnect forgotten kinships ” ; a deep all-seeing sensibility and taste (of which true intelligence consists) comes into being.

22.—It is true that if a poet is guilty of sins and omissions in his practical life, his spiritual attitude, it may be, hard, cruel, exclusive, violent, *probably* reappears in his poetry, even in what in it is most intimate and operative, in its intonation, in its own particular accent : yet where there is true poetic spontaneity there is nothing susceptible of blame, there are no perceptible gaps, nothing false or offensive. If he is cynical or cruel and wishes to

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speak of goodness with the spirit of true love, either poetry does not answer to his call, and we have no poetry (only false poetry), or he does not in reality touch the subject, or else he finds a way to treat it without leaving the vein of pure inspiration, and does not really express goodness, but something else ; or rather poetic genius and originality, the intelligence of words and of expression in general, resume and bestow on him the attributes of life ; he *is good* in these new thoughts, incarnations or forms of life (whether they be discursive, pictorial or musical).

Here the problem presents itself : where is the real man ? Am I right in seeing the poet whom I love, in his better self, in the moments when he sees his glory, or in those moments when he shows weakness, egoism and avarice and a mind closed and hostile to all reason (if such a poet exists). “ I seek the man and the apostle ; if he be not there, art itself is discredited.” Or, on the contrary : “ I recognise the man in his verses, in his novels ; they constitute for me his very self, his person, his name, his whole being ; I have never sought for his biography, nor has it ever interested me ; the mean, insincere man of whom you speak is entirely another person. I know *him* in that originality of his which is his new life, transfigured and redeemed (if you like), although in my eyes he needs no redemption, because to the existence of that other self I cannot attach any importance (and if it is not redeemed, so much the worst for it . . .) ; I love him because he is life newly born and individualised in him. For we do not love or hate individuals, but the life in them (though it is none the less true that reality belongs to the individual, because there is no life except in its individuations, life and the individual being one thing only). The individual is in fact that

novelty and originality, whose reality we never know enough ; indeed we never come to the end of knowing it."

23.—Only when we succeed in grasping the *originality* of expression in which are ever formed *ex novo* the intrinsic exigencies of matter and of life ; and which is an infinitely identical principle, and an effort to actuate in the act this identity, to identify the real in the act ; only when we fully comprehend the value and the reality of this originality which is infinite identification, consciousness of values, *intelligence*, concentration, transparency, unity of a thought . . . ; only then we do understand the power of verse ; where what is *original*, because of the infinite necessity belonging to that which is original, is at once essential, "universal," and of great concentration. It is only when expression is understood as an incessant *originality* of the prime values of activity that we understand how an image, a strophe, a rime, in short, how the miracle of poetry is possible.

. Così sol si ritrova
Lo mio voler ; e così in su la cima
De' suoi alti pensieri al Sol si volve*.

(Petrarch, *Canzone* : " *Qual più diversa. . .*"

From whence this height and this idea ? How was it excogitated ?

Life itself brought to the poet a sense of height and of light ; life at that point become a vision of glory, which is *thought aware of itself as of an eternal origin*. Such a sense or consciousness of activity (i.e., of origin) gave the idea of height and light ; height and light were individualised in the Sun (they "deduced" the Sun : cf. §116) ; the

*Literally : . . . Thus finds itself alone my will ; and thus upon the summit of its high thoughts to the Sun it turns.

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"Sun," the "will" and that sense of origin, which is also a principle and notion of freedom, perhaps identified themselves in that "turns itself" ("induced" that "turns itself": cf. §116). In like manner life brings to the poet its values; i.e., its essential truths, its acting principles come to him, or rather they are himself. Therefore the words of poets (and of common speech in general) are not approximate, "empirical," non-scientific, but are fragments of reality.

24.—All this implies or pre-supposes *novelty* of expression to be a reality. But this is not the place to develop this conception: see Chap. VI. Here I would only observe that among the different considerations or arguments upon which it rests, certainly the most noted is contained in the expression "cogito, ergo sum." A thought is because, and in so far as, we think; a will is because, and in so far as, we will. Activity is true novelty, or it does not exist. Activity is a *making*, that ever renews infinitely necessary values and relations, and which is at the same time an effort and vocation. This actuating of values, just because it is a principle of causation, just because it is not derived, but, as a reality of thought, is new (in absolutely adequate material conditions); just because it is not made, but is making; just because it is novelty, for this very reason it is intimate knowledge, it has a value of truth. The very value of truth points to this concept, of a making, at once necessary and free; and of novelty as a condition to be supposed and as a reality to be immediately and intimately known. The things said above presuppose these conceptions, which I cannot here systematically gather up and develop; on the other hand by their independent truth they are able to confirm the same.

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25.—I have then considered the words of poetry, and in general of common language, as compared with technical words and I have noted that they are often wrongly undervalued ; and the cause of this is superficial and unphilosophical thought. In times when the study of philosophy, if I am not mistaken, played a larger part than it does to-day, poets had a clearer certainty of the non-provisional value (truth-value, ontological value, reaching reality) of the words of life, of the terms they themselves used, such as "intelligence," "thought," "consciousness," "liberty," "life," "value," etc. And this, I think, made their poetry higher and more substantial, because they attached due value to what they said, to spiritual reality. This, it seems to me, may be observed in the poems of Dante, Petrarch and other poets of the XIII Century. I have next showed that the reality, the truth-value, the "substantiality" of poetic thought and in general of common language, is all the more known, the more living, and the more exempt from subordination, is the originality itself of the language, that is, in poetry and generally in the forms of art. In art language is not subordinate to anything, speech is the *subject* in every point ; *it is life and truth*. And certainly language was created as poetry, if poetic language means an expression which more intensely is *subject* (activity) and not instrument. The reality of words is essentially the reality of life. But in art, life, or that reality, has an originality which is more independent and victorious and conscious of its infinite necessity (i.e. of its truth).

26.—What forms the value of art, as compared to other forms of theoretical activity, is that in art there is *more* vision, and therefore *more* reality.

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Reality is of the origin, reality is of the original values and forms of activity. And art which is their freest outpouring and forming, if it is true, great art, *is a stronger reality than nature in its usual aspect*; it is a higher and stronger reality, i.e. it revives our faith in reality, namely that reality is not an illusion. The value of art proves the (spiritual) reality of an essential (original) impress, which is at the same time infinitely possible and true, infinitely human, "universal."

Art is *a seeing* (a representing, a knowing, an essentialising, an eternising) life. This may seem an obvious insignificant thing, were it not that we can never come to the end of comprehending what that *seeing* is. In it the original values of life or of thought have reality—"of life or of thought": I mean that they are essentially identical; theoretical thought would not understand nor reproduce practical life, were it not for such identity. . .). Hence the reality of art is the reality of original values of knowing, in their originality, which is also an infinite necessity.

27.—The serenity of art and its "redeeming power," come from this independent originality, from this overwhelming reality which carries one away from all that is too personal and arbitrary. Art is "liberation," because in it everything is transformed, borne in, "identified" with the origin, the activity. It is untrue to say that in art poignant desires and anguish are mitigated because, by their being objectified, they are controlled. The soothing power of art is due to the impersonality or universality which is ever, in different degrees, peculiar to expression, which bears one into a vaster presence, into a less narrow, less exclusively personal thought, into a higher subjectivity; and in general it is due to originality

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itself, for in it we know activity as something not exclusively peculiar to one's self and arbitrary ; for in that *seeing* there is a purer, a stronger originality.

To insist upon the conception of a work of art that is made an object and which the subject dominates, is to turn back to an old error, or at any rate to keep to the surface ; in the first place such a distinction between subject and object does not exist : the " object " in a work of art is the real subject.

Sorrow is overcome or transformed in art because it is realised in expression, which is essentially an *infinite presence* ; and because of the same originality, which is always *a new birth*—since the latter is certainly not inevitably destined to wear the weeds of our own past existence.

The objectivity of art is a knowing of activity in its necessary values and forms, where necessity does not exclude liberty, on the contrary it is at the same time liberty (originality) ; if there is true inspiration, thought in artistic creation is free and necessary ; *all the freer, all the more necessary*. In this spiritual necessity are known the intrinsic acting values of knowledge itself, in their infinite, in their (presumed) eternity or universality. The value of art consists in our being transformed into the eternal, i.e., into a more living consciousness of the necessity or intrinsicality of original values and forms.

But of what activity—it may be objected—if fully lived cannot the same be said ? Art has its own peculiar characters. Art is a form of life in that particular realm of presentments where there is a rich and vast transparency (I mean the intense, limitless, thoroughly transparent, though no less real, unity or simplicity of thought), which is concentration, identification in the intrinsic

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modes of activity. It is theoretic activity, which only by gradual differences is distinguished from scientific thought. No less is it a characteristic of art that the moment of expression in it relatively prevails when it is compared with other forms of theoretic activity. Which moment (the "beautiful") is however in every act, in every field of theoretical or practical activity ; nevertheless, art may be identified with that moment of the "beautiful" in this more restricted acceptation (which is Croce's conception).

Nevertheless, the proper value of art—principle-value, cause-value—is not essentially and exclusively peculiar to art ; it is an identifying of self with the eternal, a knowing of spiritual modes, in their infinite identity, infinitely constitutive of the real, where the spiritual originality has the character of objectivity, both because of its independence and because of its intrinsic *necessity*, by which it infinitely interprets the real.

The glory of origin, the *eternity* of the original motives of thought, are perhaps never seen so fully as in the clearness of presentments, which occur in poetic thought (I mean artistic thought in general) : but such a consciousness of the universal is also a universal principle and value.

28.—Art is an original reality not only because it is *vision*, but because it discovers the same originality in the individuals created by it. In a great poet, writer, or artist, where the work rises to higher value, there is more reality (than in other authors or in the crude fact), not only through the reality of *his seeing, of his knowing*, but because in his presentments he recollects and expresses moments of life, with a consciousness of their being original, constitutive, irreducible : life's very substance, a primal reality, a process not derived or imposed, but which

imposes itself and dominates and rules all the varied happenings. Such is a character; that is, a person who is not known in his isolated, fragmentary acts, and from whom in consequence the most diverse attitudes may be expected. The poet, least of all, stops at such an inconsistent figure ; nor does he on the other hand suppose any mechanism or determinism, or constant law (where there is no originality or liberty), neither does he fix the *characteristics* of that character; but he recognises and lives an originality, however much it is formed on the traces of the past, yet *whole, new, free, truly original* (according to the intrinsic necessity of values and forms), truly *real*, because it is not a mere compound of conditions (in which conditions in that case the reality would lie), and infinitely true (necessary, intrinsic to activity). In the living activity of his thought it does not occur to him that the actions of his creations are not a reality which is original, irreducible, and true through the infinity of its own intrinsicality or "apriority." Art, like common thought, and to a greater degree, is "apriority." And like common thought, but more necessarily and intensely, art represents persons in that which is *activity* ; in that which is original, irreducible, intimate, constitutive, "universal," "necessary."

Reality is of the original, of the underived. Real is that activity which actuates itself, whole and infinite in its values, in an effort of infinite identification. The world passively apprehended, or abstractly supposed, is one thing : quite another is the reality of the spirit (i.e., of activity) ; there is in the latter something like an irreducible sinew or nucleus, and it contains a force which is not known in the assumed conditions of activity, in "matter," in the "stimulus." And from this reality art is

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created, and to this it turns as to a stronger and non-relative reality.

The artist knows reality, not "an unreal reality," better than the *abstract* theorist and generally better than the practical man. He grasps more of reality who grasps more of the origin, who best knows values as actual and essential, who best knows them in his own conscience or intelligence, and identically in the world, and represents them in their irreplaceable actuality.

29—Art has value through its truth, which is a transporting of ourselves into the eternal of activity (of knowing). The theory that the proper character of art is *to represent*, is apt to conceal an error ; it must not be forgotten that to represent is essentially to eternise, to identify in the intrinsic or "necessary" or in the "universal" of constitutive values and forms of activity ; that therefore "representation" is all the more "representation" in proportion as it is more profound and true. The principle of individuation may have in art a larger part than in other forms of theoretic thought : but if we consider the attitudes and forms of life in general we must say that art is above all a value of universality (See my *Principii di Etica*, § 72).

30.—I briefly recapitulate by saying that words like "liberty," "pride," "hate," "love," are not at all "approximate," or "provisional," nor are they inferior to others as if they had less scientific value, but they actuate a non-illusory, non-epiphenomenal reality, they *are reality* : original reality, and *true* (i.e., *constitutive of the real and infinitely necessary*). This reality in a more intense and visible growth is found in art ; it is art.

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CHAPTER III

CONTRIBUTION TO THE THEORY OF THE PHYSIOLOGICAL CONDITIONS OF SYNTHESIS

31.—In the study of thought the problem of its physiological conditions obviously arises, and it is certainly impossible for anyone to investigate the nature of intelligence without stating his own view in this connection. It is my belief that on this problem, and particularly on the theory of supposed cerebral traces or modifications corresponding to certain thoughts, much light can be thrown, if we fix our attention to what is always apparent, but which is never sufficiently considered ; I mean the synthesis in so far as it is expressed, or formed, in external nature. Because *whatever be the sign by which in external nature thought forms and fixes its visions and notions, this, as I hold, is nothing but a continuance, or, to speak more exactly, a perpetually new origin of that same operation of nature through which the mind forms its recollections in the supposed cerebral traces or modifications.* In this hypothesis, which assumes that between a given thought and the corresponding supposed cerebral modifications there exists a relation similar to that existing between a thought and the material of its external expression ; that is to say, between a given thought and the external nature in which a given thought embodies itself, in which in fact a given thought has reality, and without which it has none ; in this hypothesis of a principle not merely mechanical, in

which the cerebral "traces" have reality, just as a given element of external nature has reality in synthesis, the obscure world of the physiological thought-conditions is no longer the ground of certain pretended contradictions.

One and the same organic principle—one and the same activity, which operates according to the same intrinsic motives and values—forms the physical body, and forms thoughts, and, among the latter, the works of plastic art (where it is in particular evidence). This is, in my opinion, the most probable hypothesis; since, if it were not so, we should be the seat of hopeless dualities, of deadly discords; and that unlimited identification or assumption in the act, that transparency or unity, which is the special characteristic of life, would be impossible. But, confining myself to a more particular point, the parallel or analogy just indicated gives me the opportunity of making clear or of pointing out some important concepts.

32.—Between a *recollection* and the supposed corresponding *traces* or cerebral modifications there exists—as I hold to be most probable—the same relation as that between the *vision* and the *picture, qua* material.

The possibility of there being "traces" or "cerebral modifications" corresponding to a given recollection or thought has been denied. Every word ought to have a sign, says Bergson (*Matière et Mémoire*, 7th ed., pp. 123-4). And every time also that I pronounce the same word there ought to be another sign, because it would necessarily be pronounced with a different pitch in different phrases. Nor would all these signs, though there were millions of them, enable us to recognise the "same" word if pronounced once more: this would require yet another sign.

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The above reasoning may seem convincing and irrefutable only because we do not think of the activity of thought otherwise than as a principle purely mechanical ; and because what happens where the secret of life is nearest to us, and yet by most persons unsuspected, is not taken into consideration.

In the picture the colours, and the canvas, *qua* material, do not sensibly change, and yet the vision is constantly reformed and varied !

In a picture the matter—and by matter I mean here the supposed, the abstract, the stimulus, the nature *qua* external nature—is *necessary*. If the colours, the signs, the canvas, the marble or the bronze fail, then the thought fails, and the vision also. If the picture be destroyed, then that thought or vision is destroyed for ever. Similarly, as it seems to me, the supposed cerebral modifications must be regarded as necessary.

One and the same picture, materially the same, expresses an endless number of new visions, which differ in a certain sense ; because everyone who sees the picture, even the same person every time he sees it, has a new and different, though not a contradictory, vision, provided he *identifies* himself with the original thought, i.e., if he understands it. One and the same picture expresses a thought (a vision) which is one with that picture, necessary, unambiguous, and nevertheless always new, in new, more or less ample, syntheses or unities. And it seems to me that something similar may be assumed to exist in connection with the cerebral modifications, where recollections, and every richness of thought and of character, have their traces : provided only we recognise an activity, working in relation to the stimuli in the same way in which it works in relation to those stimuli which are the

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supposed material condition of a drawing, of colours, of a statue, etc.*

On the other hand, let us consider how, for instance, in one of Raffaello's drawings, by means of a very few strokes of the pen—so strong is the concentration of thought—a woman's face appears which cannot be confused with any other, and behind those few touches there is a large space, a silent luminous power, although there is no other sign; and in those few strokes we see the innate joy of consciousness, the happiness of expression, the figures called into life, into being, the joy of life—and this, even if the artist draws rough and deadly struggles; at one and the same time simplicity and richness, as it were, a serene and most delicate temper, an immense resonance of life, an impress, or note, or tone, which takes possession of us and which belongs alone to the given artist. If in these arts all this can be rendered by a minimum of material, if the material is thus dominated and raised to such significance, the same, and much more, may in all likelihood be assumed where it seems that the synthesis must take place in a material infinitely more delicate and ductile.

33.—A fragment of an artistic work reveals the character of the whole, that is, the intimate operative concept of the entire work. Because in the forming of the expression every particular, in its conceptual value, is something transparent, is an unlimited presence.

If now we consider this character of activity and

*The material of which I speak, the material which we use in expressing ourselves externally, is external nature, a reality which we do not know by identification (as we know our own thought or that of others, and life in general), but only by relation. What may be its ultimate reality, whether it be equally activity or spirit—this is in my opinion a question which it is not absolutely necessary to put here. Cf. § 78. See my *Principles of Ethics*. §§ 118-121.

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suppose that the same activity operates in the formation of the cerebral conditions or modifications or traces, just as it operates when we form our expressions in external nature, we need feel no surprise, nor have recourse to theories which upset everything and bring us back to myths, on observing the fact that in a short space of time—as others notice—it is possible to recover recollections which have been obliterated either by lesion or by local disease, such as has destroyed the cerebral conditions that were believed to be the necessary conditions of the recollections themselves. This fact does not necessarily mean that the cerebral modifications which were regarded as the conditions, and, in a certain sense, the seat of the given idea, are a mistaken hypothesis, merely because the idea or the recollection returns independently of them, that is, independently of their regaining health, or of their reconstruction. On the contrary, we may suppose that other modifications or cerebral traces substitute those that are lost. If the idea is not an effect conditioned by a mere piece of mechanism, if it is a synthesis similar to that which is impressed on plastic or sonorous material, then it is not unreasonable to suppose that the cerebral modifications, which have remained untouched, bear equally the impress of this idea, which had elsewhere its proper and more particular expressions. For thought *concentrates, identifies, makes transparent* a coherent totality in each of its moments, and therefore in each of its traces (in every sound, or colour, or relief, or other material element in which it is actuated, and from which it finds ground for new developments).

If we consider the kind of *concentration* that belongs to thought in each of its moments, it does not seem improbable that remote material conditions should be called

into an activity apparently entirely foreign to them. The thought, which in a work of art repeats, in every fragment of the material, I do not say each of its particulars, but a large part of its essential motives or qualities, helps us to understand how under certain conditions the remaining part may substitute or reconstitute the injured part ; but this in a purely mechanical world would certainly be an hypothesis which we should with good reason abandon.

In a mechanical and philosophically rudimentary conception the " traces " are an absurdity, being conceived as lifeless signs, corresponding to an idea equally lifeless, and resembling mosaics, key-boards or letters of the alphabet viewed in the abstract. But they must on the contrary be likened to the material of expression.

34.—A picture, *qua* vision, does not exist, if there be no spectator. The material of expression, without a spectator, is merely matter (matter in the abstract, condition-matter, external nature, a thing necessarily supposed, abstractly recognised). The same must be said of the cerebral modifications, when the subject, the activity is wanting.

The recollection that I have of what I have seen does not itself outlive me when I am dead ; neither can a recollection bring to life again a dead man, nor otherwise become incorporate ; nor can the most profound and powerful vision create the man who contemplates it, without whom nevertheless it is mute matter, in fact it does not exist. Synthesis, at least in the less elementary forms, in the forms that we know, does not arise without a pre-supposition of favourable and inconceivably complex conditions which are transmitted. Nevertheless, the supposed traces of recollection, equally with that which is the material of expression in a given expression, bear the

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impress of life, the vocation of life : through other stimuli thought does not so easily take life, as it does from the traces, or from these signs of expression, as soon as a principle of life gives a hint of possessing them.

35.—A picture (a vision) is new, has new aspects every time it is seen. Similarly a recollection is new (different), and yet the same, every time it is formed, every time it returns.

A picture does not change, materially, in any appreciable manner ; and we may suppose the same of the traces or cerebral modifications (in which a given recollection *is* or *resides*, in the same way in which a vision *is* or *resides* in given colours or signs). Nevertheless, as regards the traces of recollections, they certainly undergo modifications, they are formed of a material, so to say, more mobile, and in more continual re-elaboration than the material of a picture. They may be most probably likened to the material of expression, when the work is not yet finished : just as when an artist should introduce new developments into his picture, and should from time to time retouch the parts already painted, give them a new relief, and gather up in them the new developments. The brain—by which I mean the mind specially viewed with regard to its material—in its untiring operation may be likened to a painter who, finding material and reason for new developments, starts from the figures already painted or sketched, but continually remodels them.

36.—Bergson objects that if the theory of the cerebral traces were well founded the absurd conclusion would follow, that by analysing the brain of anyone his thoughts could be discovered (*L'énergie spirituelle*, p. 36). Now, by chemically analysing the colours of a picture, we should never discover the thought contained in it, that is, the

picture *qua* vision: nevertheless, the colours are conditions of that thought, and more than conditions, being in fact inseparable from it. Similarly, if we could analyse the supposed cerebral traces, it is obvious that we should never succeed in discovering the thought or recollection entrusted to them. But who would be surprised at the fact that the chemical analysis of the colours does not disclose the picture (the vision)? Why then should we be surprised that the thought, or the temperament of a given individual, cannot be found out by analysing the cerebral conditions? To discover this thought it would be necessary to be the synthesis or activity of the subject himself, to know the cerebral traces or modifications not as matter, not chemically, but in the same way as the subject himself knows them, that is, by *identifying* himself with that recollection or thought. It would be necessary to find out the original synthesis: just as it is necessary to find out the original synthesis, which is the picture.

Cerebral traces, modifications, cerebral conditions, stimuli, can never reveal to us any thought; because as conditions or material of thought, they have no value without a first cause, which is thought, activity, intelligence, individuation, light, intrinsicity, etc.

Nevertheless, the physiological conditions, though they do not give us the individual, are one with him, and necessary to his existence; they are the conquest and the richness of the spirit, and the condition of every motive and development—and more than the condition, just as colour is more than the condition of painting, and sound more than the condition of music. The body is still more than the riches of the soul. The body must be reduced as far as possible; but if it is not a material that weighs

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and encumbers, it is all the more spirit, all the more soul.

37.—It seems to me that Bergson's theory must be attributed to the fact that he does not recognise the spiritual reality as a *mode*, a dominating *character*, inseparable from the material ; as a reality that is activity, liberty, necessity (not mechanical), as a principle, as a value inseparable from the phænomenon. For want of this conception, which is the classical conception of the spiritual reality—around which centres, as it seems to me, the most profound and least onesided philosophical thought—in connection with the points under discussion, Bergson finds himself under the necessity of choosing between a system absolutely mechanical and a gloomy myth. Hence he has recourse to extremes : a denial of materialism, in order to propose a conception of a spirit of strange construction . . . ; to re-propose what is in truth the old dualism of a subjected nature, and of a spirit separated from it, and in reality more matter than spirit—matter, as it were, of a more subtle kind, a fluid—and artificer of supernatural operations. These empty hypotheses are avoided by a more fortunate and thorough-going study of activity, where we may avail ourselves of the richer current of philosophical studies.

38.—The cerebral mechanism is (says Bergson) a something that limits our comprehension (our intelligence) at the same time that it brings our comprehension, as it were, into a closer relation with things, and makes it more precise. This would be the same thing as saying that the picture which we look at prevents our seeing other pictures at the same time, and that in general the material—of light, of shade, of colours, signs and sounds—belonging to our mental presentments, is the cause of

their onesidedness. But this statement would be untrue ; because, in the first place, there is no *necessary onesidedness* due to expression ; on the contrary, in every expression or affirmation of ours there is an implicit recalling and inclusion of the real beyond every given limit (cf. §§ 61, 68 and 123).

Nevertheless, this observation of Bergson conceals, or reveals, a wide truth. In his statement there gleams, perhaps, a vision of the value and reality of the formal and substantial principle : the reality of the intrinsic, that is, *the vocation of activity to form itself according to all its intrinsic values and forms, provided only it has material for its formation*. The necessity of the intrinsic modes and motives of activity, though this necessity is not formed—as I believe—before the act, though it is not a reality as taken abstractly in itself, though it is not an eternity having reality outside the act (which is in time and space), this *self-necessity*, or apriority, is a reality such as cannot be concealed, and it must appear more real than an image considered as mere material in its elements or conditions which have been put together only by external causality ; and it comes as a surprise to one who, while unwilling to recognise this intrinsic necessity or originality, nevertheless admits it in a certain way, and who, clothing an old error—as I believe—in a new dress, distinguishes and separates the former from its particular actuations. Such, in my view, may be the meaning of this obscure myth with regard to a thought or spirit, more widely and profoundly comprehensive, which by means of the cerebral mechanism would become more onesided and at the same time take definite shape.

39.—Recollection exists consciously, or else it does not exist, but only the supposed cerebral modifications

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corresponding to it exist. And we cannot strictly say that recollection comes and goes from the conscious to the unconscious (Bergson, *L'énergie spirituelle*, 1919, p. 137). Similarly, vision (the picture *qua* vision) does not exist, if no one looks at it ; all that exists is the material consisting of colours and canvas.

A recollection may exist which is *relatively* unconscious : an activity which is formed and elaborated without its becoming known to the principal centre or concentration or identification of our life ; that is, ourselves, ourselves who are responsible, our consciousness at that moment, our consciousness as manifest to us. But that recollection which is relatively unconscious will probably still be activity, life, synthesis, and therefore the same secret of our consciousness, in forms probably inferior, poorer, or like our poorest, and it will still be light, concentration, absoluteness, etc. ; it will still be the same problem of our consciousness and of our intelligence, which only antiphilosophic persons are pleased to relegate to the arcanum of a more remote place. But if these recollections are not still to be regarded as consciousness (only *relatively* unconscious), it seems arbitrary to suppose they can be anything except mechanism, chemistry, matter ; if it is true that consciousness, effort, life are kindred concepts, and if by mechanism we mean all that is not life, activity, originality, value, internal finality . . . It is easy to say that recollection proceeds from the conscious to the unconscious and *vice-versa* ; but inasmuch as the question is not of the relatively unconscious, which is still the conscious, a life unknown to our actual consciousness, and which probably has the same principles or intrinsic necessities as the latter—how could we conceive the recollection which is, or runs, or flows into the un-

conscious? An entity which we are not to regard as consciousness nor yet as matter, and which is—I cannot suppose it otherwise—as it were a breath of some finer matter: such is this empty phantom.

40.—By material of expression we may understand: (1) material which is one and the same thing with vision; (2) sensuous material in its poverty, that is, not adopted and identified in a given vision of stronger and richer individuality, or else considered independently and separated from it; (3) matter in the abstract sense, the supposed conditions of perception. I hope to have made clear, each time, in what sense I use the words “matter” and “material.”

Some materials are more easily known, so to say, *in their poverty*; others as terms of a richer thought, as *vision*. So noise and colour differ in this respect: between colour-material (that is “in its poverty”) and colour-activity there is not the same difficult step as between noise and sound. The musician hears a noise, and for the most part that noise remains a noise, and does not become for him activity and thought in any intense degree. Musical thought arises in other ways. The painter sees a colour; and immediately that colour becomes for him activity, necessity, liberty, a thing infinitely true, a transparency, a centre of identity, a principle of every reality.

The cerebral modifications must be likened to the “material” in its first meaning; such material as, being impressed with a thought and having made it concrete and actual, can hardly be separated from it. Nevertheless, they may perhaps be likened to material in its second sense, in those pathological cases in which, for instance, sounds are remembered and not their

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meaning, the appearances of things and not (for instance) their use or value, and such like.

But I have no wish to discuss a class of phænomena with regard to which it would be easy for me to fall into inaccuracies and errors. That which I maintain, and have endeavoured to demonstrate, is that the *cerebral conditions* must essentially be likened to the *material conditions in which artistic thought is formed*. This proposition acquires all the more significance, the more we consider what the material of expression is, and the more deeply we enter into this problem.

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CHAPTER IV

THE INTRINSIC MOTIVE-VALUES OF KNOWLEDGE AND OF LIFE

41.—I may perhaps be allowed to set forth, in a conclusive manner, what I believe to be the intrinsic values of activity (of knowing, and, speaking more generally, of life), inasmuch as attention is drawn to them, under different forms, in almost all philosophical doctrines; and also because I, for my part, have endeavoured in many different applications to test and demonstrate the conception of them in my *Principii di Etica*, as well as in several passages in the present volume.

These intrinsic necessities, or prime values and motives, or principles, are only known subjectively, but they are not for this reason something arbitrary. The story of philosophy consists to a large extent in acquiring this concept, namely, that what is subjective is not on that account arbitrary (cf. §. 91).

I regard as motive-values of activity :

- (a) Individuation;
- (b) Universality.

The following are also original necessities or principles, which, however, cannot be ranked with either of the above :

- (c) The originality of activity (V. § 47) ;

(d) A relation of external conditionality, the intrinsic necessities of abstract thought (V. §§ 51-53).*

(a) This principle receives innumerable names, as also it has endless specifications: *individuation, expression, form, exclusiveness, forgetfulness, violence, pride, contradiction, limit, opposition, multiplicity, matter, etc.*

(b) This principle also has different names: it is a value of *infinity*, of *universality*, of *eternity*, of *absoluteness* of the cause; it is activity in its claim of identification of the real beyond every given limit; and it is in different connections *reason, truth, charity, good faith, responsibility, non-contradiction, unlimited transparency, etc.*

Instead of values and motives other names may be, and are, used: principles, exigencies, characters, concepts, modes, causes, eternal truths, eternal, intrinsic, original necessities, etc. Perhaps the best term would be "intrinsic necessities," were it not that "necessity" introduces the idea of a mechanical necessity, in which is excluded what is effort, vocation, liberty, novelty, originality—which things are on the contrary realities peculiar to spiritual necessity (V. §47); and it also conveys the thought of a necessity *a priori*, conceived as abstract, "formal," preceding experience and independent of it, and looking for a content; while, on the contrary, form and content are not distinguishable in these principles, which—as I believe—are only formed with the act, with experience, although always in accordance with an intrinsic character; for instance, *to individuate* is a value, a force, a content, and at the same time a "necessity."

*Why these principles and not others? I reply briefly that I find no indication and no necessity or justification for other principles equally essential and underived; in so far as I am able to form a clear mental presentment of this reality, which is activity in its values, in its principles.

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42.—In the reality of an act both prime values, the principle of individuation and the principle of universality, are not separable, although the one cannot be completely reduced to the other.

It often happens that the same terms express both principles. Expression is at once eagerness of form and a forming in an unlimited transparency ; it is a *unity*—which cannot be given by (inert) matter—and this *unity* means at one and the same time *form*, and *totality*—i.e., identification beyond every given limit.*—Life is *concentration*, spirit has no truer name than this (cf. § 59). Now concentration means individuation, expression, evidence in the material, and at the same time the transparency, the identity of the real in the act—an identity vast to our utmost possibility.—*Character* means a very special trait (characteristic), and at the same time an infinite possibility.

43.—The aspects of the world, the qualities of things, as perceived by us, are formed from the sense of life in us ; that is, they are formed by these values in perpetual travail, in their infinite variations, specifications, contrasts and collaborations. These original values—i.e., exclusive individuation, and the infinite, the absoluteness of activity ; and together with these the consciousness of an originality of activity in realising these values, without

*The unity of a thought, of an act, is a totality, in the sense that it cannot but be a whole, that is to say, it cannot admit anything that is absolutely heterogeneous to it ; only this total transparency is reached either by means of an infinite identification in the principle and in the principles, and an extreme impersonality (as, for instance, in charity or in truth) ; or else it is reached by assuming the reality only through an abstract, external implication (thus : we imply the existence of what we exclude) ; in other words, either by really aiming at an infinite identification with the real, or by opposing, or forgetting, what is not intimately assumed, and by limiting the field, the problems, the content of the unity itself (cf. § 122).

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which originality these values would have no existence ; besides the intuition of an external conditionality—these are our lights, the colours and the lights in which the universe is manifested to us.* But the wealth of creation itself becomes intelligible as the work of these ever-present, ever-active values, whether collaborating or in opposition to each other. This longing for concreteness and for totality by continually returning upon and renewing its own traces, the new growing up on the old, creates ever prouder and humbler forms, sharper contrasts and wider reconciliations ; and in theoretical thought a concrete and living objectivity. The secret of *evolution* must be sought in this ever-present origin.

These “two contrary and mixed extremes,” by opposition and collaboration form ever higher realities. The pride, which is not at enmity with justice, becomes a great thing in a loving nature, in the man who most considers the rights of others and makes them his own. And that is a great love, not without a sensitive reserve, when it overcomes a strong, jealous individuality. To take another example : the generosity of a man who lives from day to day, acting under a certain less watchful responsibility, because his individual life has no unity, no continuity, is not valueless ; but of greater value and very different is the generosity of him who has a strong individuality, in the sense that he strongly identifies the future with the present, and his past and future life form a strong unity, that answers to a single demand, which is not satisfied with what is ephemeral ; and for this reason the days to come are identified by him with the present, and yet he is not less ready to sacrifice them.

*V. § 67 ; and *Principii di Etica*, §§ 3, 12.

†V. *op. cit.*, §§ 118 and 116.

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—Individuality and universality are motive-values that cannot be reduced to one, and nevertheless, the affirmation of the former is implied in that of the latter, and each is to the other a way to new and stronger affirmations, the one being a stepping-stone to the other.*

In reality the consciousness of the active principle, as something universal, intrinsic, "impersonal," infinite, does not necessarily mean for us any remarkable revelation of greatness, or high value ; this we find only when in the infinity of activity a rich material and strong individualities are conceptualised, i.e. universalised ;† only when there is a transparency, or identity in the intrinsic, gained through a wealth of particulars and living individuations.

44.—Individuation has a value of its own, which cannot be reduced to the value of activity in its infinity and absoluteness, and which certainly is inferior to the latter, when both values are in conflict in a concrete case, in a heart that is capable of both. Nevertheless, individuation is not an evil, just as, evidently, expression is not an evil. On the contrary, individuation is a good, not only because it is necessary for the actuation, that is, for the existence of the universal (as I believe), but in addition, it is a good in itself. It is only an evil if it is an obstacle to universality.

Individuation is an evil *in so far as it is an obstacle to universality* ; and this, whether in a manner merely negative, for instance, in so far as it is *matter* ;‡ or as an active principle—and in this case it is a good for whoever

*V. *op. cit.*, § 116 *ad finem*.

†"Conceptualised" means the same as "universalised" ; except for a special reference to theoretical activity. V. § 106.

‡If, on the other hand, the matter is in itself activity, and is a good, that is another question which I do not here consider. (Cf. §. 78).

is within the activity itself, and knows no other value ; and then it is called sometimes pride, haughtiness, firmness, resolution. The principle which is opposed to the *absolute* (that is, an absorption into the intrinsic, or identification with it, which admits no limits ; e.g. charity, truth) is called by different names: for instance, " the principle of negation," " of contradiction," " limit," " opposition," " difference," " multiplicity," " matter " ; but more truly it is, and should be named, *individuation*. It is more than " matter," because in face of the principle of universality it is not only something passive.

45.—Similarly, in the realm of natural history, if we consider, as others who are experts lead us to do, the structure of bodies, we see—although from an external point of view—the probable signs of the same original motives, that is, changes of specifications and of regained unity. On the one hand a given activity in more complex forms appears to be specialised and localised. But this is contrary to the spirit of life, whose essential attribute is to overcome these obstacles—specifications, organs, which nevertheless constitute its wealth and are its forms on the way of perfecting itself. And if on the one hand a given function shows a tendency to specialise and localise itself, on the other hand we find that the same function is made the attribute of the brain, where all parts stand in closer relation with each other ; that is, where are undoubtedly to be found the conditions of that *transparency* which, in the revealing of activity as an *essential identity* in different forms or moments, in other words, in the actuation of the universal, marks a more victorious effort. The spirit creates its organs, and is then sometimes hampered by them ; but when certain functions are appropriated by the brain we see that here there is a

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possibility of substitutions, of compensations ; it seems that some functions being taken up by the brain are no longer so absolutely specialised and localised in their organs ; the higher activity seems to dominate and even to substitute them reciprocally, when necessary.*

46.—How are we to explain the difference of each act, and how reconcile it with the above-mentioned constancy of principles and principle ? The truth is that activity itself, the active principle itself, by virtue of its very essence, explains the difference of living beings, and of every act, and the inexhaustible variety of phænomena.

There are extrinsic reasons of differentiation—the surroundings, heredity, everything that is matter, material condition. But there are also reasons absolutely intrinsic to thought itself. Diversity is intrinsic to the principle. And this, not only because the two values or principles are in endless opposition and collaboration—and which is to prevail is an ever-open problem, which only the history of happenings as they are lived through day by day can decide. The chief reason is that these principles are essentially activity and therefore liberty.† A further synthesis, a further transparency, there may always be. Effort is not a thing given. The reality of the spirit lies in taking up into itself other elements of matter, in passing beyond its present form, to find itself again in a new totality or transparency, which is immediately lost, except in the act of actuating it. From this springs the differentiation, the diversity which—as far as one can think—is inherent in activity.

47.—For, in reality, of all the essential values, or in-

*Cf. W. James, *The Principles of Psychology*, Ch. II. and Ch. IV.

†V. Ch. VI.

trinsic, original, necessities of activity, the most intimate, the most necessary is not the universal, nor is it individuation (it is neither charity, nor pride; nor good faith, nor deception, etc.), nor is it, e.g., divisibility or other intrinsic necessity of abstractly objective thought. Rather is it the possibility of there being ever more pride, ever more abnegation, ever more objectivity, etc. The intrinsic of the intrinsic is that intensive *more* (intensive, not quantitative, the latter being a concept derived from the former).*

48.—Another difficulty arises, and this is indeed one of the hardest problems that every philosophy has to meet. Given the diversity of actuations, how are we to explain the constancy of the principles and of the principle in its different forms? Liberty is always liberty, yet always different. Individuation is always individuation, yet always different. The infinite of origin is always an infinite, a "universal," but always new and different. What is the reality of this principle, of this essence, of that which continues to be recognisable, identifiable, in all its different actuations? Various hypotheses have been advanced. There is the materialistic hypothesis. The co-operation of time and the constancy of the physical laws explain (it is said) why life in places and forms widely separated from each other has the same characteristics, whence also a certain intelligence between the different forms is possible. This is the worst answer to the problem, the crudest solution, which at the same time shows a want of all consciousness of activity, in its values and forms, as original reality, as something dominating, active, formative in all its different relations; an identity which can be explained by no

*V. Ch. VI., and *Principii di Etica*, § 3.

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derivation, but only by its own irreducible necessity, which imposes itself and of itself impresses its own determinations. That is no philosophy which fails to see an original intrinsicity. But admitting the latter, how are we to harmonise its constant identity with its endlessly different actuations? This problem requires more special investigation.* Here I can only summarise in the briefest manner what I regard as true. In order to explain the constancy of the principles, neither the hypothesis of a reality transcending phænomena, nor the distinction between a so-called empirical subject and an absolute subject, as well as the denial in a certain way of the so-called empirical reality, seems to me necessary or justified. Activity is always a forming *ex novo*. Nevertheless, this forming *ex novo* is not arbitrariness, or chance; it takes place in accordance with intrinsic necessities, which are renewed in experience, in the phænomenon, and do not exist at all, except in their renewal.

49.—He who regards intelligence and life as differing in nature, he who sees a gap between intelligence, consciousness, sentiment and instinct, will not understand what I mean.

Here also, while replying to some more obvious difficulties which may be brought against what I have said at the beginning of this chapter, I must refer the reader to conceptions which I have more fully developed elsewhere. V. §§ 119-123, and *Principii di Etica*, §§ 67, 68.

To be uplifted into a thought which is less particular and exclusive, and is relatively, or in a certain sense, *im-personal*; to actuate activity as an infinite principle,—this is the principle of every operative objectivity, the principle whether of reason or of love; of which it may

*V. Ch. VII.

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be said that they are "instinctive." Reason, love, poetic inspiration, intelligence are all "instincts"; just as the sexual appetite and "curiosity" are "instincts"; only intelligence, for instance, must be said to be an instinct which is less particular, more illuminated, more explicit. And if we wish to restrict the term "instinct" to a more limited category of phenomena, we must start from differential characteristics that are fundamentally secondary.*

Intelligence is *essentially* the same in a musical phrase as in the most explicit discourse.

What is intelligence, let us say, for instance, even in the ripest political thought? It is consciousness of values, faith, the posing of values, consciousness of activity in its intrinsic values, in whose *identity* alone it is possible to relive in one point a great diversity of actuations, of forms; it is a presence, a transparency, of centuries concentrated at one point; responsibility; consciousness of the infinity of activity, as subordination of the particular form, as, for instance, charity, good faith, and similarly their contraries, etc.; it is acute analysis, limpid synthesis.

But acute analysis is not in the least the fruit of a syllogistic process! It is the vigor, the violence of individuation. And the *particularity of individuations*, the *wealth of individuations*, together with the *transparency of the concept* (which is not overpowered by that wealth, but rather is more intensely *activated* in it) are essential to intelligence in each of its forms, whether in an image formed in sonorous and plastic material, or in a view of

*Cf. *op. cit.* §§ 21, 22.—Cf. W. James, *The Principles of Psychology*, Ch. XXIV. Certainly James does not class reasoning among the instincts; but it is better to say nothing about that most unfortunate chapter (XXII) of his treatise, which is entitled "Reasoning."

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practical consequentiality. On the other hand, these are also principles and values proper to life.

The understanding of life is possible solely by virtue of an identity of principles, through which intelligence recreates life (i.e. other forms of life). Without which intelligence would be like a nucleus standing by itself, blind, useless, and wholly unintelligent.

In other words, intelligence can interpret life because it is itself life. This proposition is based on the following truth : there can be no comprehension, no identification, no unification of ourselves with ourselves, of the subject of one moment with the subject of another, of one individual with another and with every reality, unless through an original and common intrinsic character and overwhelming identity of the values and forms of knowing and of life. (Cf. Ch. V).

50.—When consciousness, intelligence, activity are regarded as liberty and finality, too great a value is often assigned to what is a *more explicit and more intentional design*. Hence liberty, finality, spirit, are confused with the possibility of such a design, and both concepts suffer shipwreck together. Unless this onesided view be abandoned it is impossible to understand what has been said, nor can we form an adequate conception of intelligence.

There are two opposite conceptions, out of which an insuperable dilemma has been made : the one according to which everything takes place mechanically, causally (through an external cause), and the other, according to which nature pursues certain ends, aims at certain results. But there is a third conception to which the second points, though somewhat obscurely ; a third conception, which answers certain well founded demands of the mate-

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rialistic conception, as well as of the second, the one which lies between the teleologic and the theologic. This is the spiritualist (activist, immanentist) conception.

And the latter maintains that in order that there be intelligence we are not to think of a finality, such that the end is a result, an object distinct from the act. What makes intelligence is a value of actuation ; a value of expression and of conceptual transparency ; of certainty, of objectivity, of universality, of absoluteness, of "essentiality" ; in short, a value, however rudimentary, of greatness and of light. This is the intrinsic motive of the act, the necessary and free motive. The motive is not found in a design which is conceived in the act, and still less in a pre-determined design ; but it is in a *prime cause*, in a *light*, which only in some of its forms and in certain cases becomes a design, a programme.

Intelligence is not in its essence an adaptation of means to ends, or something of this kind ; it is rather *attempts* and *actuations of values*. Hence it is clear that the word *design* represents a secondary concept, although a very high one, in the universal order. Hence also we can better understand the truth which we often find expressed whenever a profound thought finds its way to utterance ; as when we read :

. . . I have heard
By my own heart this joyous truth averred :
The spirit of the worm beneath the sod
In love and worship, blends itself with God.

Shelley, *Epipsychidion*, 126

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THE INTRINSIC NECESSITIES OF ABSTRACT THOUGHT

51.—I here bring together some examples of truth—of the so-called “necessary truths” of abstract and of substantial logic.* In reality the expression “necessary truths” is improper, the adjective being superfluous, because all truths, *qua* truths, are necessary, intrinsic, a priori. The same applies to the expression “eternal truths.” (V. § 67.)

The propositions of abstract logic (that is of formal logic and of mathematics) here cited vary in value ; but I do not propose to enter into the question of their validity, I only wish to state some instances.

The proposition that *A* is *b*, and the proposition that *A* is not *b*, cannot both be true in the same sense.

The same thing cannot possess differing qualities except in distinct relations.†

$A=A$.

$1+2=2+1$.

$5+8=13$.

Two straight lines cannot enclose a space.‡

The sum of the angles of a triangle is equal to two right angles.

The ratio between the diameter and circumference of a circle is constant.

The square root of the number two cannot be exactly extracted.

*I use as equivalent terms : “substantial” logic (where content and form are not distinguished ; indeed, they are terms which, in this distinction, have no conceivable meaning), “organic” logic, “the logic of actual thought,” “necessities of the sensible order” (as opposed to the necessities of the mechanical order).

†This principle is thus enunciated by Bosanquet: V. *Implication and Linear Inference*, p. 70.

‡B. Bosanquet, *op. cit.* p. 15.

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A unit may be added to any number whatever.

The series of numbers is unlimited.

A squared circle is impossible.

If A is on the right of B, then B is on the left of A.

If, in face of a new fact, or in face of a new demand, we refuse to take account of it ; if we remain blind in face of an exigency of greater comprehension, or in face of a new presence that does but touch the threshold of consciousness, what was truth is truth no longer, but a lie, and what was charity is no longer charity, but hardness or cruelty, or some other obstacle or opposition to the universal.

Individuation and universality are necessary moments of the act ; they are eternal (intrinsic) values of activity.

The beautiful is not an illusion of the human mind.*

Life is liberty, effort and vocation, *arbitrium* and grace.

Activity is liberty (originality).

Originality is not an appearance that may conceal a mere conditionality or mechanism.

Comprehension is only possible through an actuation of activity as an infinite intrinsicity or identity of principle. The act of knowing implies and actuates an infinite identity of activity in its essence.

The more a truth is *essential*, the more it leads us towards a real and operative identity.

52.—In saying "intrinsic necessities" I mean in the first place the eternal values and principles of substantial logic (e.g. unity, totality, individuation, universality); not the intrinsic necessities, otherwise called "eternal

*B. Bosanquet, *op. cit.*, pp. 14, 15: "the self-contradiction of affirming that two straight lines can enclose a space will not necessarily seem more flagrant than that of saying, for example, that beauty is an illusion of the human mind.

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truths," of abstract thought and of the supposed (i.e., matter); of which I have less certain knowledge.

It is necessary in the first place to correct a widespread error, which maintains that the intrinsic necessities of abstract thought, that is of mathematics and of formal logic, have a truth, a rigour, a necessity such as is not possessed by the necessities of substantial logic. This error arises partly from the fact that those whose mentality is more external, and less inside life, regard the principles of substantial logic *as things, as frames*, in which there is certainly no truth left. For instance, justice is conceived of as absolute justice, not as a principle admitting ever stronger affirmation, as an objectivity that may become ever more comprehensive, more difficult, more victorious, more subjective and profound. Every act of justice becomes injustice in a new claim. But it is obvious that injustice implies justice; just as life would not be slavery, if life were not also liberty, etc. Concepts are *free* principles, not things; and he who grasps them only as things does not recognise their reality; and the very means of knowing escapes his ken.

There is another reason—but not a good one—why the truths of substantial logic are regarded as belonging to an inferior order, or are even not recognised. The "eternal truths" of mathematics, it would seem, can always be found, formulated, and exemplified, even when thought is least lively, in its least happy moment. On the contrary, the "eternal truths" through which we interpret life, and which themselves form the content of life—for instance individuation, universality—are only possessed, are only known in living thoughts. The originality of life only reveals its characters by self-actuation, self-expression; these characters do not reveal themselves

except in so far as they are operative. In reality, the same must also be said of the logic of abstract thought. But the latter has its being in an external activity, in an extrinsic working, in a transcending or utilising of every element (without considering it in itself). We find in these constructions a principle of mere initiative, that is of arbitrariness, of a will which is as far as possible empty, an operating upon the abstract, or upon things ("the external world"), which does not require the same jealous spontaneity.

53.—The truths of abstract thought, especially in so far as they are identically regarded as necessities of the supposed, that is, of matter, of the assumed conditions of activity, expose themselves to the attack of sceptical and subversive theories (although often too highly valued, as I believe); which theories, on the contrary, have nothing to do with the truths of substantial logic. Of these truths we have certainty and consciousness, and it is in them that we find the most fruitful field of philosophic studies. Whereas too much time has been relatively devoted to the study of the necessities of formal logic, and this from a onesided point of view.

On the other hand, the value of the truths of formal logic and of mathematics—that value on account of which these sciences have for ages been made the object of unremitting philosophical research, is still the universal, an infinite identity ever belonging to activity in its originality, which we already know in the fulness of thought, and which is a truth of substantial logic.

Propositions are dealt with which establish or assume relations of external condition and, as it were, an inert "identity" in the datum, in the invariables, in that which is, or which is posited, as invariable. But their

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truth is not in the reality of any external conditionality in the object of thought. It does not lie, strictly speaking, in the validity of the formula or law affirmed. Their value of truth consists in their being conceived with the consciousness, or sense, or feeling of an infinite necessity belonging to them, which pervades all the real.

Necessities which are mere conventions, all the most insignificant relations of data, acquire great value, a whole system of logic is built upon them, and men of talent devote themselves to their study; this is because of the eternity which accompanies them, because of their necessary character, because of that consciousness of eternity, or of universality, with which they are conceived.

I maintain that the necessities or truths, the eternal truths, as they are called, of mathematics and of formal logic are so attractive and carry such strong conviction (so much so that there are persons who recognise no truths unless under these frameworks or forms), because they are themselves activity and therefore *eternity*.

For, to speak more generally, the character of truth which attends the intrinsic necessities of activity—whether of the logic of actual thought, or whether they refer to the abstract—is not demonstrated by the fact that the said necessities occur in every experience, nor by the fact that they can always be put into being, nor because they are (as is true) the condition and the reality of all our knowing; but rather, in the first place, this character is proved directly by the value of these necessities, which is a consciousness of the origin as universal.

The universal is an intrinsicality such that in its actuation it is an effort or vocation to absorb or identify the real beyond every given limit. But also a proposition of

mathematics, or of formal logic, may always be, (and in this consists its value and its reality, not supposed but actual, of which alone we have certainty and consciousness)—may always be an affirmation in which the consciousness of its value of necessity and of universality is more living, clear and difficult to reach, or it may be merely a practical expedient. For every value of universality is an active principle, in which an equalising with the whole reality, in a definitive and absolute manner, understood not as effort, but as result, is only a reflex aspect of such value, a posterior and, relatively, secondary consideration.

I maintain therefore that the principles of logic, in that acceptation of the word which reminds us of the full meaning of *logos*, characterise also the propositions of formal logic and of mathematics, provided the mind be directed not to the object of these propositions, but to their value of *objectivity*, which is ever new in every actuation. The necessities of the mechanical order, all of which, in my opinion, revolve round a relation of external conditionality, give us nothing but the mere condition.* And that absoluteness, which is their light, and which is at the same time certainty and consciousness (reality of consciousness), is still activity in its infinity, the principle and value of universality. It is the infinite or the identical of activity—a principle and value of organic logic—which in the above-named formulas of abstract thought has a means of expressing itself, of being.

*The necessities of the sensible order (i.e. of substantial logic) are principles and values; they are not frameworks which require a content, or with regard to which the pretension may arise of conceiving them in some way without a content. On the contrary, the necessities of the mechanical order do not give us the quality, nor even the quantity in so far as it is perceived, in so far as it is a term of consciousness. Cf. *Principii di Etica*, § 3.

CHAPTER V

REALITY OF THE UNIVERSAL

54.—I have used the terms “intrinsic” and “intrinsicity” in the preceding chapter, because they seem to me to be open to less objection than other equivalent terms. In reality the same principles may be equally called intrinsic, *a priori*, necessary, original, infinitely identical, universal, eternal; and of these terms we can make the concept, which is not an abstract one, but expresses a reality, and always, essentially one and the same reality. Only *apriority* (of the principle, of the principles) brings us into the concept of an original principle which in some way is formal, abstract, awaiting, or requiring, a content; while here we have to do with an original *value*. *Apriority* also brings us into the conception, or rather into the error (as I believe), of a law existing previous to, or independent of, experience, while, on the contrary, I have in mind values and necessities which form themselves in, and with, experience; indeed, they constitute experience, and although they always *return*, and *renew themselves*, they nevertheless have no reality outside their renewal in the phænomenon. *Necessity* may lead into the error of a principle mechanically, or deterministically necessary, while on the contrary we have to do with spiritual necessity, which has reality in effort or vocation and which is identically liberty, originality. *Originality* does not express explicitly the

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concept that the principle is infinitely original, infinitely identical, an infinite necessity ; that it is in the act an efficient consciousness of an infinite necessity—which we presume to be universal, eternal. *Infinity* does not make explicit the concept that the principle is original. *Universality* also fails to bring out the concept of a value which is original ; furthermore it is a term which seems to posit as proved what is only presumed (V. §§ 68, 69). *Eternity* is liable to the same objection as universality. Nevertheless, the terms “ universal ” and “ eternal,” inasmuch as they do not diminish it, better express the value of that quality of being intrinsic, which is real and operative in the act ; and in this sense they are the least inadequate terms. If we say “ the eternal principles of knowing and of life ” instead of “ intrinsic ” we use an expression which approaches nearer the truth, although it requires to be interpreted ; for a reservation is necessary, of which I shall speak further on. The term “ universal ” offers, moreover, a certain appreciable advantage, because it is customary to adopt this adjective as a substantive. Lastly I observe, to prevent a certain obscurity being attributed to any inexactness of terms, that in reality the intrinsic character of values and motives is, itself, an intrinsic value and motive ; inasmuch as it is a principle of identification beyond every given limit, it is the principle of universality, the “ universal.” There is a universality of the universal (of the universal in a given form ; nor has it reality otherwise than in a given form, expression, individuation) ; however far we go in reaching essential and subtle forms of the universal, there is always a universality of the principle of universality, as of the principle of individuation, and a universality of that universality.

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For convenience of expression, and using a term better known, and one which brings out more clearly the value of the concept expressed, this chapter is intended to treat of *the reality of the universal*. This is a reality *which we must assume, and of which at the same time we have consciousness*.

The statements already made imply, and therefore, in so far as they are true, prove, the reality of the universal:—in fact any moment whatever of theoretic and practical activity is in some degree a demonstration of this reality ; but I shall here endeavour to bring together some arguments which bear on this point more directly and explicitly.

55.—*Argument I.* The constant identity of the motive-values and of the abstract necessities of knowledge is not only that which must be assumed in abstract inference ; nor is it a thing which we may only guess and not grasp directly. We know this identity in the act as a consciousness of an infinite necessity and possibility of activity, in its values and forms. But this is not all. That identity, i.e., that revealed essential identity, the realisation of that essential identity of values and forms in the *simplicity* of an act of thought, is the value, is the force, is the reality of a thought. Its name is unity, light, necessity, liberty ; or whatever more suitable name the spirit may have.

Knowledge is nothing but an identification of the real in the infinite originality and necessity of the values and forms of activity; and the same is true of love : the experience and the realisation of an original identity; the self-revelation and self-actuation of a constant, original and constitutive identity.

I maintain that *synthesis is not only a "presupposition" of consciousness ; neither is it, so to say, something occult ;*

nor is it only an unfailing "presupposition" of consciousness and of thought; it is the reality of a thought. Synthesis—the unity of a thought, its total transparency, its absoluteness—is an identity in the intrinsic, in the *a priori*; a self-identification in the intrinsicity or original necessity of the values and of the forms of activity. And this "identity" is that which sustains, which intimately constitutes, a given thought; it is its force, its evidence, its amplitude, its height; its original and constitutive value.

I maintain that we know the universal directly in a given thought: as a synthesis, as a transparency, as a revealed identity.

56.—*Argument II.* The identity of the individual with himself is an ethical value and an acting principle; it is, in fact, anything but an arbitrary supposition. It is not only that the effort of *identifying* reality with the self—with every individual particular, *qua* activity; and therefore with the intrinsic, the eternal of activity—is the principle and the limit of every life; it is not only that this identity is the principle of every transcendence of what is ephemeral, onesided: the effort to subordinate every more ephemeral motive (every more ephemeral sentiment, will, velleity, sensation. . .) to a vaster exigency, or to absorb and actuate it in the latter; it is not only, I say, the principle of every consistence and unity of a given act and of a given individual whether in his self-denying consciousness, or in his more particular and exclusive nature;* but this identity *is* the individual. .

This essential identity† is the profound unity of the

*V. *Principii di Etica*, §§ 77, 78, 86, 87.

†That is identity through values and forms *qua* essential (original, infinitely original, self-necessary);—an *essential*, not a conventional nor an objective identity.

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individual ; it is a more urgent and lofty demand or exigency, to which every moment of his life is subservient, and which is an actual value at every moment. Without this identity, which is everywhere, at every point and moment of individual life, as its irrepressible reality, individual life would disappear.

In this connection it should be noted that it is wrong to deny the reality of the individual. This would be the same as denying the reality of synthesis, because of its having no given limits, and because its very essence indeed consists in the effort to reach an ever vaster and deeper identity and not to repeat itself mechanically. Whoever says that the unity of individual life is only based on memory, makes a statement which is superficial and false ; unless he attaches an unusual meaning to "memory," using it as a synonym for intelligence, spirit, activity. But in this case his conception ought to be more clearly expressed, because in its usual sense "memory" is not so much the intelligent principle—consciousness of values, responsibility, effort or vocation, and demand of absorption or identification beyond every given limit, in so far as the material, the exclusiveness and the unreachable novelty of the individuations permit :—but "memory" is rather intelligence from its more mechanical side, which proceeds from its material conditions in a manner less *active*, and therefore less *intelligent*.

57.—The same revealed operative consciousness of an essential identity receives very many different names : responsibility, faith, etc. It is an intensity such that in it activity is present in its values and in its forms as an infinite necessity and possibility. It is an effort, and a value, of the absolute : that is, of activity, in so far as it strives to actuate itself in the integrity of its values and

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of its forms beyond every given limit, and beyond every limit absolutely.

Identity is *light*.

Identity is *value* and *motive* (value-principle, prime value) ; it is the true subject.

Identity is the revelation of a " characterised " though ever new form, constituting the real infinitely.* It is revelation, demonstration, reality of the spirit.

Identity signifies identity in the intrinsic, in the eternal, in the absolute of activity. But it also signifies a realisation of the intrinsic, of the eternal, of the absolute of activity, which otherwise would not exist.

Identity is the *simplicity* of a thought, of a sentiment ; which at every point, in each of its moments, intends to be everything.

And every synthesis is this reality and this demonstration of a principle infinitely identical, because in itself necessary—which actuates itself in an identification as vast as possible ; and we find all the more distinctly this reality in the individual, the living creature, which is the synthesis *par excellence*.

58.—Where the principle of identity, frustrating expectation, does not actuate itself, does not exist, there—in the field of practical life—we find want of responsibility, indifference, cowardice, cruelty, deception, and the like ; because the violence of individuating, the exclusive principle, prevails. And essentially the same defect, especially with regard to the theoretical field, offends us under the form of contradiction, ignorance, error, etc. *Contradiction* means the want of being gathered up into—i.e. *essentially* identified with—a single concept, a single

* *Characterised* : V. however § 48 and Chap. VII ; *form* : i.e., informing, constitutive form ; *value*.

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principle. It is here that we see the force of the concept, of the principle : the reality of the concept as infinity. For this value of identity is also the value, the reality which, for instance, error, falsehood, lying, crime, deny and offend—whence their ill sounding names.

59.—*Argument III.* When we consider how expression concentrates itself at one point, in a minimum of material, in the slightest sign, spatially and temporally exceedingly small ; when we consider how an utterance, or an act, for instance of a statesman, is an experience, in which innumerable experiences and attitudes, different and opposing values are lived through, in which objections of every kind are in one moment contemplated, met, avoided, and answered explicitly or implicitly ; when we consider these and other marvels of any expression, act, or unity of thought, of every instant of life ; and when at the same time we bear in mind that this power of concentration is not accounted for by the supposition that it is an epiphenomenon, or a result of the unconscious, or an illusory value, which is not worth being made an object of real science : we may well ask whether this power of concentration be not the proper name of life and of intelligence ; the spirit, the essence of life.

This power of concentration perhaps escapes our attention because it is so continuous and familiar, and because it is our own more than anything else. But on more careful consideration we must recognise that it is certain and fundamental ; a thing which is specially apparent, when this concept is compared with kindred concepts (V. particularly § 62 sqq.).

Every life is an effort to concentrate reality to the utmost in one experience ; and to entrust the same to the ever renewing principle of all experiences.

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But what does this power of concentration conceal? In what does it consist precisely? It is still activity as an infinite intrinsicity, present and operative in its infinity, that is, in its originality infinitely and identically necessary, and (from another point of view) infinitely and identically possible. This power of concentration is possible through an originality, which is at the same time an infinite identity, where this identity—which exists in so far as it constitutes itself in the act—is a prime value, a motive. “Concentration” is another name for that same essential identity actuating itself beyond every limit; only it expresses, not less explicitly, the proper value of the form, of the individuation.

60.—*Argument IV.* The value of truth is the value of the *necessity* of the principles and relations by which we interpret life and matter.

Truth is reality in so far as it is known. In the first place, indeed, truth is unlimited identification with the real, adherence to the real; and it has a different value according to whether the question is to know life, activity itself, or matter, external nature. . . . But if we consider truth in its less subjective and less *actual* meaning, and according to a common acceptation of the word, it is, as is obvious, reality in so far as known. That is to say, reality in so far as it is experienced in a given moment of activity. In what way is this experience possible? It is still an “identification” in an infinite (and present) necessity.

Truth is activity which recognises activity and in that act of recognition demonstrates the eternity of the values and forms* of activity. But, to be more precise it is not

*In this or like expressions, “form” always means the *schemata* of objective thought (§§ 51-53). In a different meaning, of course, the same word is used at the end of the preceding paragraph.

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truth which demonstrates that eternity ; in reality that act of recognition is an original value, the sole proof of truth and of eternity.

Discourse, in so far as it is true, is all borne up into the eternal. Truth is all made of eternity. The eternal is the necessary, the original, the infinitely necessary, the infinitely original, the universal—not as given, but as value of actuation.

Truth is an actuating of the intrinsic necessities of thought. It is a motive-value, a “prime value,” in so far as it is an actuating, a being, of the universal, that is, of an intrinsic character of values and forms.

61.—*Argument V.* Although every truth has its limit in the material—in the phenomena which it assumes, and in its very expression—it yet always has a character of absoluteness, and there is no necessary error due to the necessary limit of the object or of the expression. And this is through the infinity of activity, because activity forms itself in an infinite identity, and never gives up, never abandons, this its proper character, and such as it is, it is infinitely, and what is true, is true infinitely, however conditioned, or else it is not true at all.

The implication of the whole in a given thought, the intolerance of an absolute duality or plurality, of an absolute heterogeneity, that is of the existence of two or more realities without any connection between them (“there is but one reality”; this is an exigency of thought such that it cannot fail or be destroyed except with thought itself), and the fact of the whole reality being appealed to in any proposition however conditioned or relative ; the overwhelming exigency of appealing to the whole reality :* these principles are the living expression

*To put any condition whatever, to state a truth as relative, to state

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of one and the same principle, of one and the same reality. The originality of the values and motives of activity is at the same time an infinite vocation of these values.

Activity forms itself according to an infinite necessity, which is in the act efficiently conscious. Unity, totality, universality, implication of the whole, are concepts which signify and confirm this same reality: an *originality* actively conscious of its infinity, an *infinity* which is consciousness, value, motive.

62.—*Argument VI.* How is something *essential* possible? This is a fundamental problem; like the problem of a reality of principles, to which the same question leads, and which in substance is the same problem.

What is essential is distinguished from what is only general. We distinguish immediately what is essential from what is only generally true: from what through experience, or presumably, is regarded as generally true.* An essential truth, or one more essential than another, is recognised, or may be recognised, or merely a vague and inexplicit feeling of it may be felt, without our being obliged to test its general validity, through its immediate value; because an essential truth appears, or may appear, as a more powerful truth, of higher and irresistible value, of greater light. Not that the force and the immediate value of a given truth may not depend on another cause, and mislead us as to its essential character; but this a proposition as only conditionally true, is in itself an appeal to the whole, to an absolute. V. B. Bosanquet, *Implication and Linear Inference*, 1920, pp. 168-169. "... every judgment is inherently absolute." "... The explicit condition, by being stated, is discounted or transcended. It exhausts the conditionality of the assertion. When it has been allowed for, then, we are *ipso facto* saying, there is nothing else in the world that can interfere with the truth of the judgment. We are postulating, that is, that whether all the ways are known, or some not known, in every relevant way, the universe supports our judgment."

*V. *Principii di Etica*, § 9.

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does not destroy the value of what *is essential*, which value is a problem certainly far from being negligible. (That which is *value* escapes the ordinary scientific spirit, or else it is passed over as a probable illusion ; but this is clearly an error and does not correspond to a truer scientific spirit). The immediate value of what is essential cannot be regarded as doubtful.

It has been said in many different ways that great thoughts are "near the founts," and that men and the ages are largely present in them ; but there are too many who, being incredulous and ignorant, regard this language as metaphorical.

And in every field of theoretical and practical activity, according to the measure of our strength, we admire and seek those who discover deeper strata of truth ; and he who looks at things from an essential point of view discovers and dominates men and relations . . . ; nevertheless we shall hear the answer lightly given that "essence" is only a name which conceals innumerable causes of unlike nature . . .

We admire the beauty of an expression which, because it is essential, therefore is intimate, human, universal, is truth certain and heartfelt ; and at the same time, because it is essential, therefore it is real and concrete, brief and of great concentration. Why is it that so many excellencies go along with this character of what is essential ? And more especially : *why is it that what is essential is, or is presumed to be, universal ?*

Now what I mean to say is that "essence" would be an empty name, if it did not lead us towards a real and operative identity.

But it is not an empty name ; and *upon the actual moment* the centuries are really pressing, and an infinite

necessity is present, not because this may be tested subsequently, but because activity is such an intensity, and truly an infinite ; in the act itself of its actuation it is luminous and strong with an infinite necessity.

The possibility of there being something essential obliges us to presume the fact of an identity of principles.

The immediate value of what is essential is the reality of an infinite, which is " possibility " and intimate necessity ; it is the reality of activity qua universality.

63.—If the character of being essential were not real, if the essentiality of any thought, that is, if an originality which is an active consciousness of its own infinite, were not a reality, were not itself a motive-value ; if the activity of our human thought—all the more, in proportion as it is spontaneous—were not necessarily, to some extent, essential : if this were not so, what would art be, except a ludicrous piece of vanity on our part ? A poem, a tragedy, a picture would be rightly accounted miserable, fragmentary imitations of another reality, of the sole reality, and they would be incomparably inferior to the latter, inferior to all perception of external nature ; they would be jumbles of sounds and colours, hardly intelligible for a longer time than the fashions of a day. But art is a revelation of the eternal, that is, it is a revelation of activity. It is a revelation of activity, as of something intrinsic, essential, whereby we are really carried into the heart of the ages. In each of its forms it is the experience of an intrinsicity ready to form itself infinitely, in the fulness of its values and modes, and strong in this its possibility.

It is only through the irrepressible integrity of the spirit in its values and in its necessities, that we are enabled, in the forms of art, as well as in general expression, not to see

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something fragile, fictitious, wanting in consistency, an ugly mixture of inadequate provisional signs—but a reality.

Similarly, the life of every one would be like “a tale told by an idiot,” and even more disconnected and obscure, if it were not for an informing unrestrainable principle, for the original necessities, the harmonies of the spirit.

64.—Other examples follow in which, as I believe, the reality of this same principle—of this same “value,” “prime-value,” “principle-value,” “motive-value,” must also be recognised. And each example can be referred to each of the above-named concepts, as, for instance, to the concepts of *synthesis*, of *truth*, of *essence* (and to very many others); for they are all connected by a kinship *ex principio*.

The more any one, in the necessity and liberty of thought, feels himself, his thought, as a profound originality, the more he is filled with confidence and faith in his work; because life will eternally build up his work again, lead it into new forms, and take shape in its traces. But this confidence, which in different degrees is always found in the works and convictions of men, would have no justification, if the essential character of any notion were only a generic name, and not an operative reality.

A moment of high value is full of its necessity (of its intrinsicality), and therefore it is allowable to say that when a critical hour has come, the things that were, and the things to be, are in a certain way present, and press upon the actual moment. We may, for instance, assert without metaphor, that when St. Paul wrote to the Galatians, “universal” history stood over him and dictated his words. It is a marvellous work of the spirit to

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to collect the possible in the present, in the infinite, in the intrinsic of the present ; and this as a value, a principle-value, a motive-value.

How often in the traces of olden times we become conscious of the eternal, not as a constant determinism, but as an impression always original, dominating, intact ; not as a document to attest that a given principle has always existed, but as a high consciousness, a present value, an irreplaceable value of life.

If it were not for an original identity of activity in its values and forms, if it were not for an intrinsicity that informs and dominates all the varied happenings, I ask whether even every moment of our daily life—supposing it possible—would not seem to be something strange and monstrous. The ready persuasion, the immediate and profound adherence with which we take part in life, in each of its moments, practical acts, mental presentments, springs from an identical originality, ready to be roused in all its traces.

65.—But the examples whereby we become conscious of activity—as of an original and infinite necessity (that is, infinitely necessary, and from another point of view, infinitely possible and great through this “possibility,” where this possibility is a reality, a present and active value) ; the examples in which we recognise an intrinsicity, or “necessity,” original and infinite in the act, and where also for various evidences it seems that we ought of necessity to infer it—these examples may be multiplied according to each person’s capacity. For we know the intrinsicity of activity every time that we have a consciousness, or sense, or feeling of the infinite. And the infinite ought not to be discerned only in a certain vague-

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ness, where the outlines of things melt away, and where in the renewed consciousness of the unity of activity, we are freed from the error of an apparently absolute heterogeneity of their aspects ; but it must always be recognised, where there is intensity of life, where there is "identification," responsibility, in fact always where there is life.

66.—It is especially in the study of the principles and of the institutions of ethics that the reality of the universal appears evident, and admits no substitute. In the field of practical and ethical relations, the particularity, the exclusiveness of individuation is seen in sharper contrast with the universal, which constitutes and, as it were, overshadows individuation. But I do not propose to enter here into so vast a subject, which has formed the object of a preceding study.* In ethics some realities stand out in higher relief, having, as it were, a more massive form ; nevertheless, theoretic expression offers conditions more favorable, under a certain aspect, for their study. How the power of rising to a view and an attitude less particular and exclusive, how, for instance, *goodness*, and similarly the feeling and the idea of *duty*, cannot be based on a bare act of will (except in such an act of will there is present and active a value, the consciousness of an interest superior to one's own particular interest), and how they are not an effect of education, or a social product, but how, rather, society, or any form of social life presupposes this value and this effort, which is a consciousness of activity as a principle relatively impersonal, that is, a certain objectivity, or reason ; all this forms a subject too rich and varied, with regard to which I must limit myself to this brief reference ; for it is also the seat of profound convic-

*V. *Principii di Etica* cf. especially *op. cit.*, § 112.

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tions, which cannot be easily created. I wish only to say that in this branch of study—and not only in this—all evidence will be of little advantage to the man who does not understand of himself that, for instance, what is goodness is not an acquired sentiment, a product of education ; who does not reject, however untaught by philosophy, the doctrines that uphold the assertion that it is, but on the contrary willingly lends his consent to them ; and who does not understand of himself that an act of true kindness is not a product of education and of social life, but implies a profounder reality.

There is no field of our activity where the eternal—to use the wider term, and one which is certainly not the least truthful interpreter of one and the same reality—is not operative. An infinite intrinsicity dominates our thoughts and acts—in which, nevertheless, it is, and without which, at every moment, it does not exist—and subjects them to itself.—The demand of the eternal, of the infinite, of the absolute, is answered in two ways : by aiming at the things that last and the things that are “ useful,” i.e., which serve for other things (utilitarianism, transcendency : volitive, external activity) ; or through an infinite presence (knowledge, truth, charity, present greatness, infinite value of the act, generosity). The first way belongs to practical life, the second to knowledge and feeling.

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EXPLANATION OF CERTAIN CONCEPTS

67.—Truth is always “*a priori*.”* The expression “necessary truths” contains a useless repetition and may lead to a false conception; and the same must be said of the expressions “*a priori* truths” and “eternal truths.” For every truth, *qua* truth, is necessary.† For instance, if we take the proposition: “This sheet of paper is white,” *qua* truth, it is truth *a priori*, eternal. In fact in each of us the sense of life (of activity), that is, activity in the originality and necessity of its value, perhaps the sense of an unsubstantial liberty, qualifies originally the “white,” that colour which we call white:‡ the colour white is not perceivable by us except through an original sense of life, which is light, and which also under these conditions forms itself according to an originality not less necessary and free than synthesis, not less underivable, not less *a priori*. Thus other affirmations implicitly contained in that proposition are from a secondary point of view derived, but they are really underived; where no derivation can substitute a present origin (e.g., if I see, this is a sheet of paper); or they are conventions (this which I see, I call a “sheet of paper”). The first (if I see, this is a sheet of paper)—without considering any further analysis as regards the nature of the object which I call “a sheet of paper,” where, with respect to every given

*I do not mean that a truth is *a priori* in the sense that it is inferred or mediated from principles (which are prior to experience); inference or mediation is at this point quite secondary, and irrelevant, in my view. By saying that any truth, *qua* truth, is *a priori*, I only mean that its cause—its spiritual reality—is in a certain sense prior to experience (though not preceding it, not existing without it, but constituting it).

†The same may be said if in place of “necessary” we use other terms of kindred meaning; V. § 54.

‡Cf. *Principii di Etica*: §§ 12 and 3.

character or quality we ought to proceed in a way analogous to that relating to the quality "white"—this first affirmation contains an act of faith concerning the character of activity, which is not arbitrary, not exclusively belonging to a given person, and not ephemeral ; and such an act is a spiritual prime ; it is the consciousness of activity in its original and necessary character.

The difference between this and other truths, the differing degree of character *a priori* or of necessity, depends on whether the original value of the theoretic act is under a certain aspect an end in itself, and a clear and living consciousness of its infinite necessity ; or whether, on the contrary, transitory and local interests are more or less involved in it, and the intrinsicality is at that point subordinated, forgotten in practical use and ends, in a system of necessities (which nevertheless is also assumed by the activity in its intrinsic character, but in another field). For instance, the ephemeral episodal element may be the chief one in an anecdote concerning Mr. A. ; but it may become secondary, or entirely disappear, if Mr. A. is presented to us as possessed of a character profound, intimate, human, universal, true ; when the figure created by art is a reality stronger than that which nature shows in its usual aspect, by reason of the originality of poetic thought, that is, because in poetic thought the values and original forms of the spirit actuate themselves more than ever freely, according to their own unconstrained intrinsic necessity.

The distinction between empirical and *a priori* wears a false appearance of precision and rigour. This distinction is lightly adopted, as if it were clearly established. The eternal forms and motives fill all our experience and are at once empirical and *a priori*.

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The distinction is in part true, and this is sufficiently evidenced when we say that a given quality or character is more or less essential, more or less profound, more or less simply expressed, and shorn of accessories (with regard to a given truth) ; when it is brought forward for ends which are extrinsic and only of transient or special interest, etc. (as I have just said).

That which makes the character of reality *a priori*, and which is no illusion of precision and a vain search after an abstractly sure term of distinction, is nothing but *the value of necessity and of universality*, a value of consciousness, through which directly and instinctively, now more, now less, we are enabled to distinguish what is essential ; what is universal, because essential, because original.

68.—*The terms : “ universal,” “ eternal.”* Is activity in its original values and in its abstract necessities a universal principle ? Is the universal, the principle of universality, a universal principle ? External nature seems to confirm the concept of a universal identity of the first principle ;* but we must observe that perhaps it will never be possible to ascertain whether an originality, always essentially the same, is to be found in nature without fail and without limit.

Nevertheless, the above question is, from a certain point of view, secondary. It does not remove the fact that the essential character—the infinite, the universality—of an expression, and, speaking more generally, of an individuation, is an operative reality, from which the expression and the individuation receive their truth, their value, and before which, in their particularity, they disappear, or appear only as an inferior reality, poorer and

*V. *Principii di Etica*, §§ 9, 118, 119.

fragmentary, an incumbrance, almost inert matter (in fact they still affirm themselves to some extent as that reality itself, but with less intensity). Only, if this "originality" is not really universal, where is its truth? If we came across forms of life contradictory, or absolutely unintelligible, what would become of the essence, of the infinite, of the universal of a given expression, of a given moment of life? The assumption that to a universality of principle, *whose proof is in an actual value*, there corresponds a universality *de facto* in the entire universe—is not this hypothesis essential to that universality of principle? The answer is difficult, as we have here to do with matters far removed from our concrete conceptions. In the first place, an essence or a universal could never be true only within certain limits, inasmuch as the world, which is perpetually creating itself, would always be unlimited. But if we admit that in some way or other what is regarded as most intrinsic in thought might at a given point be no longer so, thought itself would certainly receive a death-blow. . . . And it makes no difference if the new principle, the new exigency, should be again a principle of activity, of thought; if the new necessity does not include the old, or is not included in it, the thought that then might be assumed would not really be a thought; nor would it be a sensation even of the poorest kind—the latter is equally full of the absolute—but something entirely remote from all our forms of knowledge. That which is "intrinsic," at one and the same point appeals to the universe, and escapes all conditionality, if not by other means, by conditioning itself (as Bosanquet says). And a reality, which at one point really excluded a given intrinsicity—or truth—would exclude it altogether, and at the same time would stifle our thought; indeed our thought could have

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no existence. Nevertheless, if in nature we came across an intrinsicity completely different, this would still be no proof that ours is relative and non-existent (and the former equally so). A contradiction is not so easily established, and still less such a fatal one . . . In face of two or more contradictory propositions, it seems impossible, in the concrete case, to renounce a last claim for the truth, but rather one or other of these propositions, or all of them, must be abandoned or interpreted afresh (V. §§ 85-87). In any case this renunciation would still be an "absolute"; it would still be an actuating of the intrinsic, of the infinite, of activity; it would still be the principle of universality, an actuation, an experience, a proof of it.

It is indeed one thing to say that the principle of universality, e.g., that exigency of truth, interpreted according to its reason as it ever renews itself, can never in some place or occasion turn out to be false; it is quite otherwise to say that, in some form essentially the same, it is everywhere active, and that there is no principle which it cannot reach and which is altogether unintelligible to it. For, however serious, this last hypothesis of a principle which is altogether unintelligible, in case it were proved—as, by definition, it cannot be—could not, in my opinion, of itself establish the relativity, and therefore the non-existence of activity, as infinite intrinsicity and as absoluteness.

69.—An intrinsic principle may be sometimes conveniently called "eternal," an "eternal" value, an "eternal" necessity. This term "eternal" well expresses the value of an infinite presence in the act, as well as the value of the supposition that the vocation of life, as it is here and now, so it will probably always form itself. For this reason it is sometimes a more suitable

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term than "intrinsic," because it does not diminish and therefore does not falsify a value, which is a reality. Nevertheless, there are two considerations and restrictions which must be stated : (1) Eternity *de facto*—i.e. an everlasting, or an ever-renewing, principle or reality—is only a supposition ; (2) admitting that, in all probability, activity is eternal, in the sense that it is and always will be, nevertheless, we cannot say that activity *is* in this meaning eternal, except under a second restriction ; every actuation of activity, and therefore every reality of activity is—as I believe—temporal, and its identity passing through its actuations, which are always new and different, has no reality *per se*, and therefore has no eternal existence, except in the abstract, as a supposition which is not necessary, and entirely unreal. Activity in its forms is, as I understand it, temporal (V. Chapter VII). Therefore the principle (activity) is not "eternal," inasmuch as nothing real of that principle is eternal ; since its eternal renewal is really always new, original. In reality the same characters, the same principles renew themselves ; but really and absolutely they are not *those* ; they are *the same*, but not *those*. The actuations, the forms, the phænomena and even the characters, the principles are no longer those. Eternity must be wholly reduced to a perpetual novelty.

The same considerations hold good with regard to the term "universal," with particular reference to space, instead of time. Nevertheless, this last ambiguity of meaning, as regards this term, does not exist in equal measure ; because, if it be said that a given principle is universal, we do not mean, as a rule, that that principle is a reality such that through a certain continuity of its own it extends itself throughout space, or that it annihilates the latter.

CHAPTER VI

THE CONCEPT OF CREATION

70.—The notion of activity as an original principle is furnished by activity itself in a manner which admits of no substitute ; but different arguments point to this notion, whether because they demonstrate abstractly its necessity, or because they refute opposing arguments, or because they awaken a livelier consciousness of activity as *novelty* or *creation*, and make its notion clearer and more explicit.

71.—*Argument I.* Where there is activity, and not mere mechanism, *the conditions do not give that which is conditioned.* This conception has been recently investigated with great acumen by Parodi, and, from another point of view, by Bosanquet. I quote here the passages which seem to me more noteworthy, collected from D. Parodi's volume entitled *La Philosophie Contemporaine en France*, Ch. XII ("Conclusions").*

"En tirant la conclusion d'un syllogisme, je suis libre, par ce fait même que j'en comprends la nécessité ; je la comprends, donc je ne la subis pas, mais je l'accepte, je la reconnais, j'y acquiesce ; les prémisses ne me restent pas extérieures, c'est-à-dire contraignantes ; mais, saisies par l'esprit, elles sont dominées, comprises par l'acte synthétique même où je les confonds en leur conclusion. La preuve, c'est que, l'attention se relâchant ou se détour-

*Paris, Alcan, 1919.

nant, elles eussent perdu aussitôt pour moi toute aptitude à se fondre, tout leur droit d'imposer la conclusion" (p. 482).

"... à mesure que l'attention se détend, nous sentons comme une extériorisation croissante des termes les uns par rapport aux autres ; ce qui nous détermine, ce sont moins alors des raisons que des causes, moins des arguments que des impulsions, moins des motifs que des forces ; elles nous restent comme extérieures alors, nous entraînent sans nous convaincre, nous mènent sans que nous les adoptions ; à la limite, elles ne se laisseront plus concevoir qu'à l'image des mobiles spatialement juxtaposés se poussant mécaniquement l'un l'autre, l'expression quantitative de la science subsistant seule dans l'effacement de l'intuition conscientielle interne, et nous donnant l'idée même de la nécessité brute" (p. 483).

"... Ainsi le mécanisme n'est que la formule équivalente, exacte, mais figée et abstraite, du mouvement même, une fois qu'on l'a dépouillé de ce qui en fait essentiellement un mouvement, je veux dire ce qu'il comporte malgré tout d'originalité et de nouveauté absolues" (p. 484).

"Mais surtout, à chaque pas d'un raisonnement, la liaison même des idées qui constitue la démonstration n'est pas démontrée elle-même, mais est perçue, saisie, sentie comme valable, comme nécessaire, comme évidente. Dans tout jugement de même, si les termes sont pensés en rapport, leur rapport même, c'est-à-dire proprement la pensée et le jugement, constitue une véritable intuition. L'acte de penser en soi, la position d'un rapport entre termes, étant passage d'un terme à l'autre, unité de l'un et de l'autre dans leur relation, ne peut être qu'indécomposable et qu'immédiat ; et il est spécifique encore,

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puisque'il constitue le sens particulier de l'affirmation, ce par quoi elle est telle affirmation, distincte de toute autre " (p. 489).

72.—If then we have to exclude in the conscious elements a judgment entirely predetermined by a series of isolated judgments or mental presentments—as they might be abstractly conceived outside that judgment—there would remain the possibility of a determinism in the “unconscious,” or of a physiological determinism—which is not even considered by Parodi, and with good reason. The supposition of a physiological predetermination, or of an unconscious of any kind, not possessing the characters of the activity of thought, and being a something absolutely unconscious,—this would appear a very strange pretension, as soon as we come to consider it closely. For there is undoubtedly the physiological aspect or reality of a given thought ; but how could such a reality direct of itself the development of my reasoning, while the reasons of this development are apparent to me, and while those reasons are values which operate just in so far as they are consciousness ? We should have to suppose a physical substratum, acting and intelligent on its own account, yet corresponding precisely, for instance, to this present discussion in every point. But in this case it would be a duplicate, and would therefore not be a process entirely predetermined—unless the activity also, whose development I follow in the world of presentments, for instance in this reasoning, should be mechanical, or predetermined (which is precisely what it is not).

But the unconscious never ceases to flatter our superstitious mind. Now the unconscious is either mechanism, in which case, as I have said, there ought to be this surprising coincidence in it ; or else it is a something

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relatively unconscious, and in this case the same principles and the same arguments as for the synthesis, of which we are conscious, would probably be valid in regard to it, any other hypothesis being arbitrary and empty.*

73.—When all the elements of a reasoning-process have been given, and among these the activity itself of thought—admitting that it can exist or be conceived so abstractly—yet the reasoning could not be reconstructed by their means. For every element, in so far as it is in the reasoning, is activity ; it is something different from what it might have been, abstractly considered. Bosanquet remarks that the character of absoluteness, which is always implicit in every reasoning, however conditioned or relative, and which is an appeal and, as it were, a challenge to all the real, cannot be presupposed, because it arises precisely in the act of reasoning.†

In the act of reasoning every element becomes operative in the reasoning process, becomes reasoning, becomes activity ; a moment of necessity and of liberty, a value of expression, an effort or vocation of unlimited identification with the real, a principle of integration in every necessity and in every original value of activity.

* Cf. W. James, *The Principles of Psychology*, Vol. II, Ch. XXVI, p. 584 : "... the drainage currents and discharges of the brain are not purely physical facts. They are psycho-physical facts, and the spiritual quality of them seems a codeterminant of their mechanical effectiveness. If the mechanical activities in a cell, as they increase, give pleasure, they seem to increase all the more rapidly for that fact ; if they give displeasure, the displeasure seems to damp the activities." These facts seem to exclude—though it is also excluded by obvious reasons—a determinism purely physiological ; they show how that which is consciousness, for instance pleasure, collaborates intimately, directly, in the formation of the physical conditions of activity ; they refer us again to the study of consciousness, that is, they take us back to the realm of those studies which have for their object consciousness or thought.

† Cf. B. Bosanquet, *op. cit.* pp. 168-169.

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We must, however, remark that the mere fact of this actuality, which does not exist before the reasoning or independently of it, is no proof that the actuality is a *novelty* (rather than derivation or transformation, in some obscure way). That which proves the novelty is only and still a clear notion of actuality, an immediate cognition of actuality, sagaciously sought for in the heart of the reasoning, where we see how it issues, indeed, how it forms itself, and where manifestly the conscious character is not a mere effect, but a principle : a cause which at the same time is effort.

74.—*Argument II.* “*Cogito, ergo sum,*” “I think and, inasmuch as I think, in the act of thinking, I exist.” The same idea may equally well be expressed as follows : “I feel, love, will, desire, and therefore I exist.” On the other hand, if I said : “I live in a given town, a given street; and therefore I exist”; in this second case I do nothing but decompose an affirmation into a relation of condition, which in reality introduces no new element to demonstrate the affirmation itself, the same as if I said : “I think, and therefore, from this fact, I deduce, I conclude that I exist.” But when I say, as in the first case, that I think and therefore exist, I say that in thinking there is a certainty and consciousness of a reality, more than in the affirmation of an existence abstractly, however necessarily, assumed, that is, not lived through, not wholly a term of consciousness, of activity, not intimately known. The chief point is as follows : in thinking—in desiring, in willing, in loving, etc.—we claim to know the being, the reality, not as an illusion, but as a truth, as a something true absolutely, because every moment of consciousness, in its forming, is a consciousness that its forming exists just in so far as it is forming itself originally

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(freely, not by imposition nor by derivation, but by an internal necessity). This originality is expressed in the said proposition ; yet not in the most adequate manner, chiefly because the originality of the act does not show, and ought not to show, the reality of a subject distinct from the act (as would appear in the said proposition): this originality means an experience of the reality of activity *as subject*, and therefore of the existence of a given thought, will, or desire, not of an individual or of an agent distinct from his own action. But this difference does not touch the chief question, and does not prevent the formula from being clear and true. The desire did not exist, now it exists because I desire ; the will did not exist, now it exists because I will. A thought forms itself, and in forming acquires consciousness, acquires faith in its own existence. This consciousness and faith in existing arise : (1) from the immediate value of activity, as an intrinsicality and infinity, as a something which is not arbitrary ;* (2) from the originality of the act, as a consciousness of novelty, of something which is not entirely determined by pre-existing conditions, which does not entirely resolve itself in the latter ; a consciousness of something which is not imposed ; which might not have existed ; which is, because it puts itself into being.

The essential value of truth, in so far as it is tenacious and great, proves *creation* ; for it is nothing but creation. This is because the truth-value of any thought arises from the fact that it is constitutive of the real (and because, at the same time it is a consciousness or sense of an intrinsic necessity, of an *infinite*, of creation itself, and of that thought itself). We are confident of knowing the real, because we are ourselves a consciousness of a forming of the act, where the consciousness of that formation is a

* V. *Principii di Etica*, § 61 *ad finem*.

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cause. If it were not for this participation, we should have no faith—as, on the contrary, we always have—in touching the absolute. We should possess nothing but arbitrary, or conventional, or useful fictions and constructions, hypotheses in themselves equivalent; only illusions and dreams would have any reachable reality (at least if it should be granted that the latter are our own creation).

75.—*Argument III.* We never perhaps come so near to the knowledge of that which is origin, creation, novelty, as in the feeling of guilt; that is, in the moment when we feel *that what nevertheless might have been, is not.*

He who accuses anyone postulates an absolute making, which it is impossible to interpret as a reality existing before or independently of the experience itself, while it also excludes a determinism in the materialistic sense.

In order to admit guilt it is necessary to allow as logical a statement like the following: "You have not done well, though you might have done so." The accused may reply: "I understand that my consciousness might have been more awake, that I might have been more truly a man, but I lacked that thought, or that force, or that spirit, without which it was *really impossible for me to do* that which now I fully recognise as the better course. I have kept myself, as you say, monstrously apart from life, apart from activity, blind and deaf as I am. But this has befallen me precisely because I lacked that thought (or spirit, or activity, or force, or whatever you like to call it)". And to this the only answer can be: "Your might have acted differently, because that thought, that synthesis, or "transparence," could have formed itself *ex novo*. *That synthesis could have formed itself entirely ex novo; and I make you, whom I blame, identical, not with your past, but with this novelty that*

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I expected. You might have acted differently, because your will could have arisen *ex novo*. That arising, that forming is in fact the reality of the act. And this is an integrity of life which is always renewing itself (if the form formed, the dead form is not substituted for it, and if a narrower, more exclusive reason does not impoverish or oppress it . . .). The reality of the act is something truly new, although it assumes the past and forms itself in it. It is that novelty which is truly life. And the blame is not so much directed against you *as against the life that is lacking*, which at that moment might be, and yet is not ; but you are justly held responsible for the life, for you are life, and life has no existence except in individuals."

Hence, in blaming anyone, generally speaking, in every conception of responsibility, an absolute making is postulated—in addition to the conditions favorable to the given act which we await, without ignoring, of course, what is due to heredity, education and physical conditions. An origin is postulated, not an illusion of origin ; a forming (in accordance with an internal necessity, or a vocation), which forming is a cause ; an original power of being. Otherwise, if this "power of being" were not real, then only the act of avenging humiliated love, and offences against the law of love, would be justified ; the individual would be nothing but a scapegoat. If then we do not pass superficially over the reality of the guilt, of the duty, of the remorse, of the responsibility, if we do not forget these and other principles and values, or if we do not abandon ourselves to a hypothesis crudely assumed and unexplained (i.e., that these principles are illusions), it is in fact here that our sharpened sense of life, the subtlest argument no less than the strongest feeling, the deepest

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and most convinced reason, tell us that there is an originality.

This "power of being," however, is not contingent, because if it were, also in this case there could be no guilt; but it is a vocation. It is not contingent, of course, even when by hypothesis we leave out of account its connections with the past. The "prime," the motive, is a vocation, which may form itself or not, and yet it is not contingent. If it were not for a spiritual necessity in this formation, our feeling of guilt would have no truth, no meaning, instead of being the intimate spirit of life. In so far as our expectation of the act contains some truth, so far is it true that this power of being is not "contingent." If it were so, there would be no reason to expect, and still less reason to claim, the act, and to blame others, or to feel ourselves blameworthy, for the fact that we do not raise ourselves to a new transparency. On the other hand, this contingency would not be understood. What can be meant by the statement that this power of being is contingent? If it depends on a fortuitous meeting of conditions, then this "contingency" is subject to a mechanical necessity or predetermination, which the word "fortuitous" only conceals. Outside the mechanical order, where, as Bergson remarks, it has a relative meaning, the conception of contingency is obscure; unlike the conception of vocation, which at least we are conscious of in ourselves.

76.—This further forming of activity is a fact with a nature of its own, which we can only recognise (and which in fact we always recognise, every time we call it by its name, which is "effort," "demand," "vocation," "grace," "arbitrariness," "spiritual necessity," "liberty," etc.). But we cannot interpret or verify it ac-

according to that form of knowledge which is in us the exigency of an external conditionality. There are those who do not know truth, except by passing through and identifying the real with this form of conceiving and of being, which is the relation of condition. Hence the question: where is the cause, where are the conditions, of this novelty, of this putting into being, of this forming, of this renewing faith and reality? Conditions there certainly are, but it is equally certain that there is a novelty, a reality, which if it were absolutely conditioned or "caused" (by a cause in some way external), would not be a novelty at all. And this is the reality of which alone and always we are conscious: inasmuch as the conditions *are inferred*, however *necessarily*, but *they are not known* (intimately), except in so far as they are actual, in so far as they are novelty, activity. This is an experience which we all have, all the clearer in proportion as we more intimately grasp a consciousness of activity. And the forms of knowing and of being are perfectly identified with it, excepting only that obscure exigency of external causality.

Now it seems to me that this exigency has no power to oppose either that experience, or the principles of substantial logic: that is, the principle-values, in which we always interpret the forms of life and in which we are more closely identified with the reality, and acquire more faith in truth than when, as a basis of our science (and as a final court of appeal for the true, in every problem alike) we posit the principle of causality, the necessity of an (external) condition. (Cf. §§ 85-87).

77.—To pass beyond a *further* limit; to lift ourselves into a conception or feeling less particular, into an impersonality deeper, fuller, richer, truer, and at the same

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time more personal; to raise ourselves to a new objectivity; to gather new experiences, truths, reasons; not to shut oneself up and grow stiff; not to make oneself exclusive in any thought or affection; not to cleave to any truth that has been won; but rather always to give oneself up (*qua forma formata*) to a newly revealed identity, to a renewing transparency, to a new actuation of the identical, the intrinsic, in diversity: in this *further* step lies the reality of the universal. And this self-making, which in truth is the life of life, the spirit of the spirit; this self-making, as a new thing, free, "necessary," is perhaps never so manifest to us as in the moment of responsibility, or of guilt, or of remorse. Here the universal forms itself, makes itself; nor can any more intimate knowledge of activity be attained. The demand for a universality and a perfection hitherto unreached forms itself anew in the womb of the past. He who blames himself or others, necessarily assumes, and at the same time actuates, feels, knows an absolute making, free, not imposed, not fortuitous, and not arbitrary.

In so far as the reality of guilt is deep, so far the principle—intrinsic, "eternal"—of the guilt is new in the act, and its reality is not something existing before the experience or independently of it; and so far it is not an illusion, in place of which we ought to recognise the mere effect of its conditions, in accordance with a deterministic interpretation.

78.—*Argument IV.* *Inert* being is an obscure, not to say absurd, concept; inert being is not being.* That which *is*, if it really *is*, *is* continuously, through an unceasing becoming. The term "conservation"—it has been observed—is only in appearance clear and definite;

*Cf. D. Parodi, *op. cit.*, pp. 479-80.

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in reality, either conservation is activity or else it is impossible to understand what reality is at the bottom of this conservation. It seems that in the conservation of energy we must suppose a continuous originating. Without a ceaseless originality it appears that being would have to be resolved into nothing. Up to the present the physical sciences do not prove this hypothesis, but they also do not prove the contrary. Yet it seems to be the most probable conception.

If this conception be attributed to energy or to matter, it certainly cannot be corroborated to-day, as I believe, by any radical and decisive research. If it be ascribed to activity, to the forms of life that we know (and therefore by hypothesis to matter; assuming that matter, or energy, is activity itself, in forms remote from us) this consciousness is an immediate value, a consciousness of activity as *activity*, as a something really active, as creation.

An originality in energy or in matter—almost a changeless renewing, yet in accordance with a vocation—is certainly an obscure conception; although we may perhaps discern it in ourselves, in every more obstinate and less enlightened instinct, and in habit.

In order to find a reality in matter, an *ubi consistam*, there was advanced the hypothesis of an atom or of a molecule not only undivided, but indivisible. The arguments intended to demonstrate this necessity, in such an abstract field, do not appear to be decisive; they seem to promise in their apparent precision more than they maintain. Nevertheless, this hypothesis is suggested by a forcible argument to be found in the living demand whence it springs, that is, in the idea of something active which is required to be the basis of that indivisi-

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bility, through which that indivisibility would have a meaning.

We may say—and this is clearer and more certain—that in matter or in energy—as in spirit or activity—there is, there must be (in order that a reality, an *ubi consistam* be not wanting) something *active*; that there is a principle, a novelty: a novelty not like a vacuous shadow that tells nothing, not an activity previously existing, and then creating—because in this case the word “creating” would have no meaning; but something in the activity which is really *activity*; an originating not entirely conditioned or derived; a vocation or necessity of being, which has its cause in itself. This, it seems to me, we must necessarily suppose, otherwise the *ubi consistam* would be lacking. How can inertia pure and simple, in whatever way we try to conceive it, produce being, substance, matter? This argument, although it needs confirmation, after it has become more analytic, is not without value.

This principle of activity—attributed to matter—is probably such as approaches the conception of the materialists, while yet belonging to the spiritualistic conception. We must say of it that it is an impulse to exist which is not mechanical or inert; that it is uncaused, or self-caused; that it is perennially new; that it has in itself the principle of that which is liberty and consciousness; that it is an impulse or a necessity *sui generis*, which we interpret, and indeed know, by the analogy of our own thought (of our own consciousness, of our own will).

The same thought often occurs in the forms of pantheism and mysticism, and it is old, like the activity whence it springs. Matter in its most intimate structure

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does not keep itself in being except through its originating. The world would cease to exist, were it not that it *is*, continuously, through a ceaseless originating. It was with a profound sense of reality that St. Francis thanked God for the hardness and consistency of the rocks that supported him.

This pantheistic thought supposes that in the heart of matter there is *activity* itself ; and touches the centre of the reality which we know, and which we ourselves are.

79.—*Argument V.* The reality of the spirit as a reality of principles constituting and dominating experience would not be comprehensible, if this reality were a derivation, a compound, an effect.

A principle-value that always upholds a certain identity with itself must be a necessity in itself, having in itself its own cause ; it must be a value necessary in itself. And it can be a value necessary in itself only in so far as it is an origin, a principle—where the word “ principle ” must be accepted in its full and clear meaning, as really a principle, a beginning, an originality.

That which *informs*—not metaphorically—diversity, must be a principle, an originality, not a derivation.

80.—*Argument VI.* The integrity of thought in its values and forms cannot be given by the past.

The ready integration of thought in its truths, directly the argument, or the occasion, or the possibility presents itself, and in general that which is the development of a thought, are not explained, or are only very clumsily explained, by assuming that these truths existed *in germ*, or were *latent* ; on the contrary, they become intelligible through the originality of activity in its intrinsic values and motives and in its forms. The development is

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conditioned by that which was in the past, but it is carried on by a present intrinsicity (V. §§ 119-123).

81.—*Argument VII.* It is not a good argument to say that in the act we do not know the mechanism, the pre-determination, a relation of external conditionality or cause, by reason of our ignorance ; since the proposition : “ Beneath life there is mechanism,” or “ Life is at bottom mechanism,” is not confronted simply by another hypothesis, but it is confronted by a clear notion of life or of activity, which it contradicts and excludes. It is a proposition or interpretation which excludes life ; and if it were true, then this life-illusion would have to be affirmed and explained.

Life is non-mechanism. Those who say that activity is mechanism have not really *activity* in mind. Activity derives its certainty, its truth, its absoluteness, its every value, from its self-action, from the fact that it makes itself.

82.—*Argument VIII.* Not unconnected with the pretension of there being the necessity of a relation of external causation in every interpretation of facts, the following question arises : “ How is any sort of activity possible, if there is not something or somebody that acts ? ” A distinction is therefore usually made in activity between a subject that acts and an action that really is no longer activity, but a sort of propulsion, or other obscure conception of inertia. Activity is decomposed, on the one hand, into a subject, in which there is nothing really coming into being, nothing new, original, *active* ; a “ subject ” which is nothing but a datum, or a complex of data, *a complex of conditions which moves something* ; on the other hand, it is resolved into a relation of external causality ; that is, of *condition* (where the effect is

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necessary and proportionate ; a relation which does not seem to open the way to any further investigation, the cause remaining a condition or occasion with a correspondence quantitatively measurable, but never really a factor or motive). Thus the moment of activity is lost in an empty reasoning in which reality disappears.

When of a sudden a new pride, or a new love, or a vision, or a sense of responsibility awakes ; we know activity as a something truly active, truly new, and we are, as I think, in the truth. Yet we separate ourselves from that pride, that love, that vision or synthesis, and we posit ourselves as the cause ; or else in the heart of that very thought we separate the thought which is developing, and we make it a cause distinct from its development and pre-existing in some way. In all this there is a multiplication of errors.

For if we say, in a literal sense, that a given conception develops itself, that a given moment of the expression turns or develops into a new expressive moment—not even this corresponds altogether to the truth. That first moment of the expression, in so far as it is gradually turned or developed into the new moment, no longer exists, and therefore can do nothing more, much less develop itself. If, however, we suppose that that first moment is capable of turning itself into the second, and meanwhile, to effect this operation, does not entirely cease to be, but co-exists, so that at every point there co-exists something of the first moment as a subject, which works this change ; then we have again an extrinsic operation, a given subject, which acts. Consequently here also the false presentment of a subject distinct from activity repeats itself ; only here it appears more false than ever. That which is activity, development, is

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new ; it may take life in as large a measure as we choose from what precedes ; but the preceding cannot really create the new, because not only its operation would be an operation *ab extra*, entirely obscure, but also what precedes would have to co-exist, and this is not so in the above concrete case.

The truth is that the subject, the motive, is always new in the expression. In that conversion or development there is always something active, *which is the true subject*. And this is a fresh concreteness, a value of expression or actuation, which operates according to an intrinsicity of its own, and operates only in so far as it is new.

The subject is only in novelty ; whether we call it value, form, object ; creator, creation, creature . . .

The same conception in more general terms, in all its truth and in all its difficulty, may be stated or exemplified as follows : the baby, that is, the real *baby*, is born, and it is not in point of fact the parents that give him life (a strange claim !), but he takes life, otherwise it could never be given to him.

The dividing of the original moment of synthesis into two moments, that is, the activity which synthesises, being posited as a subject or agent, and the synthesising process, where there is no longer any subject, any active, original principle—this division is false ; and when it is made, there is not a single word of the statement which retains any sense.

83.—The erroneous or misused presentment of a subject distinct from an activity arises in part from considering practical activity. Here the will is, as it were, the using of a lever on ourselves to operate on the external world.* The real subject is still activity ; but the

*V. *Principii di Etica*, §§ 85, 86.

individual considered from the point of view of his past, and his organism tempered for the struggle, in its own particularity, stand out in such strong relief that the convenience of that presentment and of that distinction is obvious.—For the most part, in considering practical action, we distinguish the subject, means and end. Nevertheless, here also, if the action is a living one, the *end* is not really an immovable goal, an abstract end, but *value* and *motive* ; the means are not really simple means entirely indifferent to the subject, except for their utility, but they are a form of the will, that is, material for the forming of the will, material of willing, material of action, just as a given sensible element is a material of expression ; the subject is not the individual as he is individuated specially in consideration of his past, of his civil status, of his physical conditions, of his aspect, but it is the *activity* of a given individual at a given moment (where his education, his past, etc., are gathered up into the act more or less deeply). The volitive act is not formed unless it is *one* with the subject and with the end ; if the latter were entirely presupposed there would be no room for the forming even of an appearance of will, of an empty initiative. In fact, also in practice, at the actual moment of the act, this distinction (between subject, end, action, etc.) disappears.

Activity cannot be decomposed into a subject (which acts), and an acting (of the subject). A subject alongside of activity does not explain activity, but rather makes it incomprehensible. Activity is at every moment always and entirely actor, subject, and motive-value. Similarly, what is usually called object, is subject, motive. If that which is usually said to be object were not really activity, subject, we should have an extrinsic operation on a thing

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supposed and hardly at all thought and lived through ; an operation only so far necessary, free and intelligent, in proportion as (and this always occurs to a certain extent), the object is activity, subject. Every distinction of a subject, of an activity of the subject, of an object, of an end, of a means, in the originality of the act (considered as a fundamental distinction), makes us lose the conception of this originality and substitutes for it an extrinsic operation, which, in so far as it is extrinsic, has neither spontaneity nor intimate necessity.

An extrinsic or external operation means an operation according to ends rather inferred than actual (which do not themselves, through their original value, bring about the operation itself) ; an operation which, although it may be methodical, is, in any given relation, blind and mechanical, and which, in so far as it is extrinsic, is only necessary for conditions which are abstract, crude and empty of sense. On the contrary, we have an intrinsic process of formation when there is a luminous principle in the very actuating of thought ; when forms and values are actuating themselves in the wealth of conditions in accordance with a necessity which is absolutely one with these values and forms, and which therefore is not derived, caused, undergone or imposed. Only for this reason an intrinsic formation is intelligent : that is, it is values and necessities originally actuating themselves. If this originality, which implies the identity of the actuating with the object of actuation, should disappear, at that very point we should find ourselves in the dark : that which is actuating itself or taking form could no longer really be actuating itself or taking form, according to necessities which are intrinsic to the taking of form, to the actuating of activity, because these necessities would

no longer be the true subject, a something active ; indeed, they would no longer exist at all. We should therefore have an operation unintelligent, arbitrary, mechanical, etc., and only intelligent in so far as under other relations a certain spontaneity might not be lacking. Only the fact that values and forms are novelty, subject, agent—and not object, or means, or an activity which *supposes* a subject—explains the special character, the perfection and the value of every intimate, intrinsic formation : by this fact alone are explainable the diversity of forming in matter (which is art ; “ genius,” whether in the field of theoretic or practical thought), and on the other hand the diversity of manipulating matter in the poverty of arbitrariness and according to a distinct end or plan. This intrinsic process of operation—where activity in its eternal values is an unimpaired subject, and where the distinction between subject, action, means, end and object either does not exist, or has an entirely secondary meaning—is proper to poetic spontaneity and, in all likelihood, to nature in general. (Cf. Chap. I, II and III).

84.—*Argument IX.* The distinction between subject and object, as it is improperly drawn, leads philosophic study to fictitious constructions instead of to experiences of thought, thereby certainly estranging the true lovers of knowledge.*

In the first place, if the subject does not know itself except in the object, this ancient doctrine implies, however one may wish to deny it, a “ prime ” which is not knowledge . . . In the second place this conception is not consonant with the conception of activity as original *value*,

*I speak here of the object as a mental presentment, i.e., in so far as it is thought or felt ; I do not speak of the object as an external reality.

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where "consciousness," "liberty" and "creation" are inseparable concepts.

In general what is called "object" is really the subject. In the act of knowing every presentment is subject, activity. The material of expression itself exists in so far as it is activity, and as such it is subject, and it is active in the development of the concept.

The subject dies in the object; and this is the act of knowing . . . That which is here called the "object" is really the subject, the *novelty* in which the past is renewed, identified, gathered up; it is activity, it is a renewed integrity of life: the absolute, the universal in which it is reborn. Yet we call it an "object," in face of the past moment of expression, in so far as we can hardly consider the latter entirely past and lost as a subject.

We may distinguish more clearly the moment of individuation or expression, which is unique and jealous, and define as "object" the expression or individuation, the expression more particular and concrete in comparison with an exigency, or concept, or principle which we shall call the "subject." Also in this case the object is really subject, an active principle: only it may be called, in a relative sense, an "object," in face of the concept viewed as a deeper exigency. Nevertheless concept and expression are *one*; the expression, in so far as it is an expressing, in so far as it is activity, is a concept; unless it be entirely without value, as a "form formed," it is necessarily a concept, an infinite. On the other hand, the concept (as I believe) has no existence but in the expression, that is, in the self-actuation; and this distinction or duality is not necessary, it may not be apparent and may not exist. In expression we do not find, and it

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is impossible for anyone to discern, a necessary and absolute distinction between concept and expression.*

The "prime" is a full value, of an individuating which, through its *necessity*, is an infinite: where universality and individuation, necessity and concreteness are inseparable, where they are one and the same reality.

85.—*Argument X*. It is not easy to see why the necessity of a relation of external cause or condition must be extended to every interpretation of facts. This is a form of knowing which undoubtedly takes us into the heart of reality, but also, sometimes, it is an unjustifiable way of viewing the reality. When we are not concerned with knowing exterior nature and the abstract, but with identifying ourselves with the actual, with the unity of the act, which conceptualises (essentialises, universalises) every datum, and at one and the same time forms itself, this relation of conditionality, this mode of framing the real is out of place, is something which cannot claim to be a final appeal for truth.

86.—In this connection I remark that a necessary and insoluble contradiction between causality and originality does not occur—or, at least, I have never met it, nor do I think that we ever can. If either principle is formulated incorrectly, taken out of its truth, interpreted falsely, then it will certainly run counter to what is true, and it will have to be abandoned. But, in so far as they are true, the formulæ of the two principles will not be in contradiction. And in order to accept the one principle, in a

*In other acceptations, a thought is "objective," because it is carried up into a more comprehensive subjectivity, into the consciousness of activity as a personal principle and yet infinitely impersonal.—"Object" is the name usually given to the datum, the supposed, the "invariable," to all that satisfies an abstract exigency of extra-subjectivity and transcendency. (V. note on preceding page).

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given case, it is unnecessary to reject the other absolutely ; this necessity would have to be tested and made evident in a particular case, and this evidence does not exist.

There are no irreducible antinomies. If ever a reality exists which is not a mockery, and if knowledge (e.g. the knowledge of the activity itself of thought) is not a mere illusion, of the two incompatible interpretations one must yield place to the other. Thus the idea of the datum being necessarily limited and calculable cannot hold its own against the idea or the exigency of the possibility of a datum beyond all limits. The fact that we cannot imagine space except in zones is no reason why space should not be boundless. The impossibility of conceiving it, here only means that we cannot form a mental picture of it. We may however understand that this impossibility is relative to any mode of representing or imagining reality. The datum cannot be imagined unless limited and calculable. But the number and the limit are not the ultimate appeal. That which is given may have no number, no limit. It is not proved that there can be no limitless "void." It is not a contradiction to say that the stars are innumerable. And if any one says that it is impossible to imagine infinite time, that, for instance, a thing has always existed—he does not thereby exclude its possibility ; and if we consider the two exigencies, namely that of assigning an initial point, a limit, and that of supposing that a given principle or relation has always existed, it is clear that the two exigencies cannot be treated as alike, but rather the first is secondary, as it were a kind of inevitable inconvenience, a necessity which belongs to every mental presentment, which necessity however has not an equal claim of being true. The im-

possibility of imagining space and time without putting limits to them, and without putting a new limit indefinitely to every new space, or period of time, does not contradict the inference of unlimited space, or time, or conditionality, or of something which exists in time and space and originates itself eternally and universally.

87.—Activity is the reality which we know most certainly ; it is the source of our knowledge. It is to this voice that we ought to turn and listen without prejudice. What does it matter if this originality is a concept difficult to represent, and if it does not square with the concept of exterior causality ? This concept which is obscure in itself, and incapable of throwing any light upon the most important problems in a certain order of phænomena, cannot claim to subjugate the reality of interior experience, and dogmatically oppose a conception much more consistent with reality.

88.—But who can understand that activity is *novelty*, or otherwise has no meaning ? He alone who discovers it by himself has cognisance of activity. Moreover, he who has grasped the idea of activity often loses the conception of it very soon, so that all he has left is an abstract conception, an empty supposition. For if at a given moment the mind is sterile, and lacks this originality, this life, it loses also the notion of it ; while, on the contrary, the truths of external nature and of formal logic, especially relations of condition, are not so easily lost (V. § 52).—The notion of activity itself is lost, activity is no longer viewed as a novelty, as an originating, as the *being* which is continually, actively, as an original becoming, a something really *active*, not merely apparently so, through illusion or misunderstanding.

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The reality of activity as *activity* may be expressed by others in happier terms. Yet the consciousness of it cannot be substituted ; indeed, this consciousness is capable of knowing only spontaneously. Activity is a thing that is seen, felt, known, and this experience and knowledge is left to the experience of each individual.

There are arguments that avail to dissipate errors, to prepare and almost force the mind to understand this most lofty, simple and rich *novelty* ; yet all the same they cannot give the consciousness of it, precisely because consciousness itself is novelty. Certainly the study of the activity of thought, the further we advance in it, ought to awaken a more and more explicit notion of it, in ever clearer presentments . . .

I maintain, then, that no notion of any kind can be given, still less can the notion of activity as a novelty be given. Because thought can only know in itself what is novelty, by the experiencing of that novelty, by an act which must be a novelty. The originality of life cannot be easily taught : the notion of it accompanies a less sophisticated sense of life, and it is the principle of intelligence itself.

Only this notion may be awakened, it may be expressed, indicated. In fact, there is no want of such expressions ; all language is full of them, is made of them. One of these is, for instance, the very word "novelty."

He who does not see truth except in the forms of an abstract relation of condition will have but a fugitive and very defective notion of the concept, of the essence, of the infinite, that is, of the necessity in which the particularity of the form is lost, or, in other words, of the activity, which actuating itself in the unity of the act, and forming itself according to an infinite intrinsicality, strives to be every-

thing beyond every given limit, and absolutely. That value which is identically individuation, universality and originality, that principle which is not created, nor yet uncreated, but which is always the creator of itself, according to an intrinsic character of its own, will be invisible to him, and he will not experience it in its value in an explicit thought, or only faintly. He will always regard the notion of liberty as doubtful and precarious, because even if he is willing to admit a certain liberty, that is, an originality, he yet does not see it, does not really know it in his clearest and most explicit thought, but only in an instinct which his theory has not gone deep enough to reach, and to which it has remained extraneous ; and he will always return to the idea that life is an illusion, that mechanism is at the basis of life : life, forsooth, and originality and liberty and guilt, etc., are illusions ; at bottom there is nothing but mechanism. And in saying that life is nothing but mechanism he will try to reconcile the former with the latter, without perceiving that he thereby loses that which according to general belief, and also according to his own belief, is in fact life, activity.

Origin is something really *new*, or it is an *illusion of origin* . . . But although we always speak of originality and of novelty, and these conceptions are repeated in every expression, woe to him who says that originality is really originality, that novelty is really novelty.

The language of common use would be full of error and deception, if the conception of originality or the novelty of the act were not true, because we find this conception constantly implied. " But the language of common use may be full of error and deception . . . "

Language, however, implies the reality of origin so profoundly that such an answer has no value. *Language*

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is a novelty constitutive of thought and in that very point full of necessity : otherwise it would be a blind detritus, not an eager intelligence (cf. §§ 63 and 74).

Nothing is which does not put itself into being, which does not continually, incessantly put itself into being.

Nothing is which is not creation. We see, we touch nothing but creation.

The conception of activity as creation, as novelty, may be represented in a thousand ways, and there is certainly no lack of profound and adequate expressions of this concept. It is expressed, for instance, in a particularly explicit and courageous way by Lachelier : “ Ne craignons pas de suspendre en quelque sorte la pensée dans le vide : car elle ne peut reposer que sur elle-même, et tout le rest ne peut reposer que sur elle : le dernier point d'appui de toute vérité et de toute existence, c'est la spontanéité absolue de l'esprit.” *

The necessity of a creative principle in the heart of nature is also posited when it is asked how the world can be without a creator, and who then created the creator, etc. To which there is no reply, except in a kind of agnosticism, or in an ascetic view full of renunciation, according to which the world is only the shadow of an unknown reality ; or else, in admitting or recognising a *creative principle*, and not a blindly mechanical one, in the heart of nature, in its innumerable forms (provided always we do not renounce the knowledge, but look for it where we find conditions particularly adapted for the search, that is, in the forms of thought and consciousness).†

**Psych. et Mét.*, Paris, Alcan, 1911, pp. 157-8 : cited by Parodi, *op. cit.*, p. 412.

†This is in accordance with the belief which I hold, that we also are nature. Of course, if we take our stand simply on dogma, or, on the other hand, if we attribute the Cause to blind necessity or to chance, the dilemma has no reason for existing, and the conclusion does not hold.

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This thought always recurs : namely, that, in order to explain the present state, the evolution of forms, and the genesis of the world and of every creature, we are not to suppose an impulse given *ab initio*, but rather a present God, a principle always new ; that we ourselves in our essence are in the heart of the real, that we uphold the real ; that the real is a position of value, an act of faith ; that what we call the real *is*, and is no illusion, because we make it ; that the luminous principle of reason would not exist, if it were not activity ; that activity exists only because it is not mechanism ; that if there were no activity (novelty, creation, effort), life would be reduced to ashes, and the ashes in turn to nothing. But the consciousness of this *activity* of activity, (and for that matter any other knowledge), certainly cannot be given to him who does not of himself understand it.

89.—I do not claim to have exhausted the arguments ; I am only unhappily conscious of having exhausted my efforts. I now proceed to speak of what seems to me the most serious difficulty that the above statements can encounter.

An opponent may say : an *arising* ex novo I understand, or I can dimly imagine, but I cannot in the least understand a *self-forming* ex novo, that is, how something *forms itself*, if it previously does not exist. You say, for instance, in speaking of poetical expression, “ a something forms itself,” “ a desire of concreteness forms itself.” But how is it possible that something which does not exist, wishes to be, longs to be ? To recall an instance you have given, a mother says : “ I did not decide the baby’s birth, but it was the baby that decided to be born.” But how could it decide, if not yet born ? Is this perhaps a question of the mistaken conception of a relation of

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causality, of condition, in interpreting the real? It does not seem so. An exigency of anything whatever, in so far as it is exigent, exists, and *if it does not exist, it is not exigent*. How can an exigency be given which *forms itself*, without first existing? It would be comprehensible in a physical or mechanical world, where every development proceeds entirely from a cause or condition: an exigency arises (is caused) without previously existing. But to say that an exigency *forms itself* without previously existing—this is a harder matter. Under favorable conditions a something which previously did not exist *forms itself*: it forms itself, that is, it is a subject, an active principle in forming itself. How is this possible?

Nevertheless, so it is; this is the reality. A *pleasure* that forms itself without pre-existing, a value whose essence is to be subject, active principle, reason of its self-making; a value whose essence is to be effort, or vocation; which is uncaused; and which is not casual. An activity which is always and only *novelty*, always and only *present*; where the past exists only as a trace, as inferred material conditions (whose intimate structure is still perhaps present activity, novelty); whose being is the value of a self-forming which is identically infinite relation—that is, a principle of identification, of “conceptualisation,” etc., and which yet has its principle, an originality of its own, almost a centre of its own, or focus, in every creature, at every moment.

Given the conditions, *synthesis* forms itself *eagerly*.

This is what we feel, see, experience. On the other hand, this is what we must infer. This is also commonly recognised and supposed: only we hesitate to recognise it in a more explicit theory. Yet it seems to me that we ought to recognise it all the more in an explicit theory:

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that is, that we ought to recognise a self-forming, according to an intrinsicity, which self-forming is a cause, a "prime."

When something is forming it is really the *novelty* that forms. The subject is really the novelty, that is, an integration of life ; it is activity in its values and forms in so far as they are original, self-necessary. The subject—the agency—is an ever new integration of life which forms itself in the traces of the past.

CHAPTER VII

THE ACTIVE PRINCIPLE DOES NOT PROVE AN EXTRA-PHAENOMENAL REALITY

90.—The principle of universality is always new and different in every actuation ; yet it is always the same principle. Similarly, liberty, vocation, effort, for instance, are attitudes always new, yet ever the same. Of what does this “ being the same ” consist ? Of what does the constancy of the principles, the “ infinite identity ” of the principles, and of the principle, consist ? Without this sameness no identification, no comprehension would be possible. And we become conscious of it in every thought ; and every value of greatness, and every thing, in so far as it is good or bad, true or false, is the realisation and consciousness of that identity. Philosophy begins only when we discover this identity of an intrinsic principle, informing the diversity of happenings, and having its own necessity.*

The materialist ascribes the wonderful correspondence of the attitudes of thought and of life in general, in far-distant times and places, in part to the constancy of physical law, in part to the slow work of myriads of centuries. This explanation does not grasp in detail the facts, nor pretend to do so. It offers no real explanation of them ; and arises from an ingenuous adoration of the

*V. Chap. IV and V, and *Principii di Etica*, §§ 9 and 117.

unknown (the lapse of time), to which it is easy to attribute any power whatever ; above all, it ignores the reality of activity as an informing principle. More profound philosophic thought has endeavoured in different ways to solve this same problem, and recourse has been had to a reality of principles existing outside experience and outside phænomena, or to a reality in whatever way transcending experience and phænomena. I would mention Plato's doctrine of ideas or prototypes ; Leibnitz' pre-established universal harmony ; the different degrees of reality, and the absolute, according to Bradley, also according to Green, Royce and Bosanquet ; and the metempiric subject, in an immanentist philosophy, according to Gentile. It seems to me that these solutions of the problem cannot justify themselves, nor can it be understood why recourse was had to them, and why they are, and have been, upheld with such faith now and in the past, if it were not for despair of any other solution. Yet I think that preceding philosophic thought itself, and the inadequacy of these hypotheses, lead us to accept the following solution of the problem : namely, to recognise as a reality the continuous re-forming of life according to necessities (principle-values and abstract necessities), which are always the same, and which yet have no existence at all without the act, without the phænomenon, in time and space ; where the fact of their being always essentially the same can be attributed to no extrinsic cause, nor yet to their conservation, because they are not conserved, because their essence lies in their originating, in novelty, in their forming *ex novo*.

91.—The history of philosophy, or at least of that part which, in my opinion, forms the most important current of philosophical study, may be recapitulated in two phases,

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in two great conquests, which we may briefly state as follows :

(1) It is not I who make the truth : which means that I cannot, *of my arbitrary will*, make a thing *true* (or *beautiful*, or *good*). Of this recognition Plato's thought is luminous and full ; in modern times no one has demonstrated this point with greater clearness and depth than Bradley.* In this recognition the discovery of an intrinsic activity, is, or may be, implicitly contained.

(2) It is I who make the truth : by the word *make* we here understand the realising of activity according to intrinsic principles ; where the activity is not an arbitrary act, a mere initiative, devoid (as far as possible) of content, but it is liberty and necessity—as, for instance, in the work of the artist, who knows his act to be free and necessary ; all the *freer*, in proportion as it is more *necessary*.

But there is another step that must be taken, which is not a step backwards, if it be effected by taking into account the principles, a reality of principles ; if it be effected, not through ignorance of them, but rather through a livelier and more adequate, a less vague and, as it were, timorous knowledge of the intrinsic and eternal. The intrinsic necessities, otherwise called "*aeternae veritates*," come into being each time with the act ; they do not exist independently, nor as a reality outside time and phænomena, as an a-personal *logos*, nor as a reality of the first degree, in comparison with its "actuations" or "appearances." There is neither an a-personal *logos*, nor on the other hand an empirical subject. Matter and spirit are one. The phænomenon is everything. The

*Cf. F. H. Bradley, *Essays on Truth and Reality*, Chap. XI.

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eternal is temporal.* The absolute—an effort or vocation of unlimited identification in the reality—is temporal. The motive-values of activity must be recognised in their intrinsic character (or, as it may be called: original, self-necessary ; infinite, eternal, universal) ; the eternal must be recognised ; but at the same time we must recognise that the eternal is one and the same thing with its act of expression or individuation, and that it has no existence outside its individuations (actuations, expressions), which co-exist and follow one another, and are therefore in space and time. The infinite principle in its reality and its value should be better recognised ; and then we should find, as I believe, that it is unnecessary to abandon the common view that the reality is temporal and spatial. The principle of a *logos* differing from the empirical, outside time and space—an easy way of actuating the absolute—this principle, or, better, this construction, is not necessary.

92.—By *necessity* I mean the principle (law, activity) in its values and in its forms ;† bearing in mind that this necessity is at once liberty, vocation, effort. I maintain, then, that necessity comes into being every time with the act.

Necessity dwells in the very core of every making, not elsewhere, not like a something that is self-existent. It has no reality except where there is life, or where there is matter.

*The eternal : activity as a principle *original* and endlessly *identical* with itself, and present in the act in an effort or vocation of infinite, and absolute, identification. "Eternal" and "absolute" are terms which express essentially one and the same concept, one and the same reality ; it is only in a secondary sense that they may differ (cf. § 54). "The eternal is temporal" : in any case, it would be the word "eternal" that is unsuitable, if it must be used to mean that the same principles and necessities do not proceed *ex novo*, and that their return presupposes their reality and continuity outside time. (V. § 68).

†Forms : that is, the necessities of abstractly objective thought.

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Any proposition, if true, undoubtedly is so before and without my expressing it, before and without my existence. But if the things that I say were true before I said them, this is not because of the pre-existence of the truth, nor because it exists independently of what I say, or of the phænomena to which it refers. If the given proposition be true for every one, and before I express it, this only means that the given truth forms itself as a necessary exigency or principle. That is, synthesis has certain original (intrinsic) necessities of its own, through which if any synthesis had arisen, at any time, or ought to arise, under similar conditions, and with regard to similar problems, it would have been, or would be, certainly, different from mine—different as any enunciation which I form of one and the same proposition is necessarily different, because every enunciation only exists, in so far as it is an *effort* of comprehension—different, but not contradictory.

I may say: " $7 + 5 = 12$ " ; or: "In truth and in charity there is a consciousness of activity as of something not particularly or exclusively belonging to any one of us." Now my liberty lies not so much in *revealing* these statements as in *putting them into being* ; for in reality they have no existence except in the act of my thinking, or abstractly in that which is inferred ; and in the inferred they do not exist, except where something exists, for there cannot be, for instance, divisibility without matter, just as no falsehood exists without life. And if I say *to re-vivify* instead of *to vivify*, that is not because the necessity pre-exists or exists independently of the act. I should always say simply *to vivify*, *to awaken* (not to re-awaken), were it not for all that which is a trace, and, in general, a material condition, heredity, history, and for

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the implicit thought that synthesis, when and where it forms itself, forms itself (has formed, will form itself), according to the same necessities.

The "truths of reason" have no reality except in so far as they are thought (and therefore represented, expressed, though only internally)—or except in so far as the life or the external nature to which they are attributed has reality.

Therefore they have no reality except in so far as they are temporal and spatial, since expression is always temporal and spatial (by expression I mean any presentment even if not expressed externally, however fugitive and immaterial it may be). That which makes us think of the reality of a relation, independently of its formulation, is its necessity; but it does not follow that this necessity may not form itself everytime *ex novo*, when there are conditions favorable to its formation. The intrinsic (or necessary, original, universal) character of a value or of a form, does not imply its existence *per se*, independently of the actuating of activity.

A truth which is true everywhere and always (and this is the attribute of every truth *qua* truth; cf. §67) is not on that account outside space and time. "The square root of the number two does not exist"; "Form and totality are necessary qualities of the act of thought." These statements are true, but are not for that reason outside space and time! They do not indeed exist, except in so far as they are represented, or except in so far as the material to which they refer exists. And their light and their eternal necessity—that same necessity which causes also such formal verities, as are otherwise most unimportant, to be so greatly regarded—is entrusted to their ephemeral material conditions, and has no existence and

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reality whatever except in the act, in the actuating of activity, which actuation is temporal, phænomenal, objectively conditioned, successive to, or co-existent with, other actuations ; or, if they are not considered in their actual value of truth, but for that which in them is abstractly objective, or attributed to that which is an inferred reality, they do not exist except where there is matter, or except where there is life. And inasmuch as they have no elements of transitory interest (except from a secondary point of view), therefore they will in fact always return with life, and will certainly always be true, wherever there is life, time and space, and from this standpoint they triumph over time and space ; but I do not in the least see that they exclude time and space as unreal.

93.—He who denies the reality of time—that is, the consciousness of becoming, or the condition of succession—is probably attracted and dazzled by the great light which illumines, and blinds, the man who considers activity in its universality, or exigency to assume, i.e., to identify itself with, the real, infinitely and absolutely : when he discovers that this exigency is so conveniently satisfied by the concept of a Deity, or of an Absolute, or of a Relation, or Cause, which are conceived as extra-temporal. And he does not see what a poor imagining this is in comparison with the reality, and how false it is ! For only through the reality of becoming and of every differentiation, specification and individuation of activity the affirmation or recovery of the identity of the law has any meaning or value.

If we remove time, the consciousness of becoming—where liberty gives the idea of the future, and the datum the idea of the past—the reality is not only impoverished,

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but destroyed. The idea of time and the idea of activity, that is, of the spirit, are one thing only.

As regards time as a condition, or abstract time—the inferred condition of succession—this has a value not wholly relative, if—as I think we must suppose, and as our consciousness seems implicitly to suppose—there exists a relation between it and time (the consciousness of becoming), of which last we cannot say that it has only a relative value. Similarly, abstract space, space as a condition of co-existence, is perhaps not unrelated to concrete space, which is, like concrete time, consciousness of activity. If space as a condition is conventional in its measures, the space which is consciousness of activity, for instance, consciousness of activity as a principle relatively impersonal, as objectivity, as a spiritual necessity, or equally as liberty, or also as an extrinsic action,—this original, concrete, conceptual value is not relative, or it has not yet been proved to be so ; and cannot space as a condition, which receives its intuitive value from activity, have with reference to activity itself a non-relative reality ? We may, for instance, multiply abstract time, “astronomical” time, and the calculations never lose their exactness, and there is nothing changed. Could the same be done with concrete time, with the revealing of a thought ?* We can enlarge, while keeping the proportions, a circle, a triangle, a material object, *qua* material, and there is no apparent, perhaps no absolute, change. Could we do the same for that which is life ? Could we suppose the body of a living organism to be thus enlarged, and its dimensions increased, without any difference being made (every condition, every element being proportionately varied) ? Movement considered

*V. H. Bergson, *L'évolution créatrice*, p. 10 (8th edition).

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abstractly, as the movement of one body with respect to another, is certainly relative; the movement of inert things may be relative both in its measure and in its being . . . ; and motion and rest are confounded in a cosmos that is not activity, effort; but what if the movement is activity, if it conceals an originality? (cf. § 78). These considerations, however, are not necessary here. By the reality of abstract space I mean simply the reality of the individuations *that co-exist*. And I regard this co-existence as an undoubted reality, though it can only be inferred, not actually experienced, not thought. A relation of external condition, whether abstract time or abstract space, is a reality not less true, although in the unity of one thought there cannot be several actual thoughts. Several thoughts co-exist and follow one another, although we can never think, and therefore truly know, and make actual and real, more than *one* thought. . . Yet the reality of a relation of external condition, that is, of a succession and co-existence of phænomena, is an evidence with regard to which the burden of proof falls on him who denies it.

He who denies the reality of time, or attributes to it a subordinate reality, rejects the following propositions: Spirit in its wealth and greatness forms itself and increases absolutely. Progress, in so far as it exists, is real. If time (that is, the consciousness of becoming, i.e., of activity) be removed, the reality is not only impoverished, it is destroyed. Several individuations co-exist and follow one another. The individual, synthesis, is reality; etc.

94.—But the fascination of a symbol, the fact of not investigating more closely, more clearly, the original necessities or truths themselves; the fact of not having

formed or accepted the hypothesis of a formation *ex novo* of the law in every individuation, and the wish to explain the identity of the law by means of an inferred truer reality; on the other hand, the error and the crass arguments of those who, while considering the phænomenon, deny all intrinsicality and spirituality; these and other motives lead those who are not ignorant of the eternity and intrinsicality of the law—and the question can have no interest for others—to deny the phænomenal reality and the temporal nature of the law, almost as if only by their denying them they might recognise that eternity. Yet in a more explicit investigation of the spiritual reality such a contradiction is not met with—or at least it escapes me. The active principle does not prove a reality outside phænomena. We may admit an intrinsicality without having recourse to the conception of a reality outside space and time.

95.—The universal *belongs to the thought of a given living individual, at a given moment.*

Each act has an infinite value; it gathers up or identifies with itself every place and time beyond all given limits, infinitely; but not on this account is it less true that *several acts co-exist and follow one another.*

The demand to pass beyond space and time infinitely—the demand, that is, effort, vocation, impulse, in which the reality of the universal consists—ought not to induce us to regard space and time as overpassed, does not imply such an extra-phænomenal reality, or rather such an error.

Other arguments contrary to this assumption are equally inconclusive.—

The difficulties met with in looking upon matter as real do not of themselves constitute an argument valid enough to make us accept the conception of an extra-

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phænomenal reality outside phænomena, and of an empirical reality denied or underrated, because these difficulties are very small in comparison with those we meet in refusing to believe in the existence of matter, that is, of the conditions and the inferred reality which is called matter. And because these last difficulties are obvious, they are not, for that reason alone, to be neglected!—

Viewed in its actuality, the act is an infinite relation with the whole ; it is not something isolated, sundered from the reality of the whole. The act forms itself by gathering up and excluding (implying) and does not form itself otherwise. The thing done may be conceived as isolated, but the act is a relation with the whole ; it is in so far as it is a relation with the whole. Only that which is abstracted from thought, that which is inferred, may be something absolutely isolated. The “ isolated ” act certainly has no meaning. Nevertheless this concept does not exclude an original focus belonging to each moment ; it does not exclude the possession by every creature of an originality all its own. The act is not a relation or a complex of given relations, but an effort or principle of relations ; unity is not a compact system, but an effort which comes into being at every point.—Everything is relation, that is, unity, effort of identification or implication beyond all limits . . . But I do not think that the concept of relation, and still less the concept of novelty, exclude, as it were, a distinct focus, which is essential to the novelty in each of its moments ; in any case, this does not seem to me a cogent or decisive argument, to invalidate the reality, as being not only apparent or subordinate, of the “ empirical subject,” of the living being, of a given synthesis.—We must further observe that the very terms “ to imply,” “ to include,” “ to ex-

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clude," "to gather up," etc., evidently seem to imply the reality of a co-existence, a reality not actual, not real in the thought that implies it.—

"Matter and divisibility are a single concept; and when matter is contrasted with spirit, spirit is materialised"*: yet neither is this argument clear and decisive. In the first place activity (spirit) is a principle, a character, and one cannot well understand what is meant by putting activity, regarded as an object, in opposition to matter. Moreover, in this connection the following certain truth (as I hold it to be) seems anything but negligible: I mean the fact that the principles of individuation, of exclusiveness (for instance all that is struggle, pride, expression itself) are also spiritual, and yet imply, not indeed heterogeneity, but division and multiplicity.

The above arguments are not clear and conclusive, if through them we wish to prove the unreality of a relation of external condition (*necessarily* inferred), that is, of the inferred conditions of that which is an actual thought of a given thinking subject.

96.—Thought *forms itself in the material* (cf. Ch. I., III., VIII.). A given thought would not exist without a given sensible material; it forms itself and varies intimately according to the material used, according to every, even the smallest, element of expression.

The expression, the form, the making itself visible, the coming into light (it does not matter, of course, if this be in forms clearly communicable, or only internal), *the appearing* is not only necessary for, but essential to, being;† it is not a property of being, but it *is* being, a

*V. G. Gentile, *Sommario di pedagogia come scienza filosofica*, Vol. I. pt. I, Ch. XV.

†Hegel, indeed, says something similar, but does not draw the same conclusions. V. *Vorlesungen über die Aesthetik*, ed. cit. Vol. I, p. 12.

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something active, constitutive ; a prime-value, a principle-value ; it is a reality than which no other more profound or more irreducible can be imagined or conjectured.

And if the appearing—the phænomenon—is spatial and temporal, then we must say once more that the reality is spatial and temporal, not because we stop at the first certainties of an ingenuous thought. I mean the reality, not excluding the reality of the principles, that is, of necessities or intrinsicities, which are not separable from the actuating of activity ; the reality of an original value, which the study of activity demonstrates with ever greater clearness to be intimately, essentially one with the actuation of activity in expression or in individuation.

97.—I here re-state the conception which has been several times expressed, by saying that whatever sense, reasoning, value, reality I may be able to grasp, I find the re-confirmation of the conception which is also that of common-sense ; namely, that a thought does not exist unless a given man thinks it. Every thought is the thought of a given individual, at a given moment ; and in this must be found the concrete universal and every greatness. The eternal law—by that I mean activity in its intrinsic values and necessities—has no existence except in individuals, nor, in so far as it is understood of the necessities, abstractly inferred, of external nature, has it any existence except in matter. The eternal law comes into being with the act and does not pre-exist. Acts innumerable pre-exist, follow one another and co-exist, and in these the law itself is actuated, where, however, the actuating is always original.

Thus the unity of a thought—a principle or law of unity and totality—the unity of a thought is always unity, but

it does not exist before or after or without the given thought, the given phenomenon. And what is most probable—the only thing probable, as far as our understanding reaches—is as follows: this unity—though always the same—is a reality truly new in every act, forms itself with the act and ceases with it. And, on the other hand, the act, the sole reality of which we are conscious and certain, is temporal in a double sense: because it is consciousness, that is a becoming, and because we imply in it innumerable acts as co-existing and succeeding one another. This unity is new in each of its moments; novelty is its being. Similarly, the real *is not*, except in so far as it is novelty—but the fact that I do not actually think it, does not exclude the existence of such novelty.

Each of us ephemeral beings carries and transmits the infinite. Nevertheless, the divine light of a limitless gathering up or identification with itself—which is the true essence of the act, of the spirit—is no argument for holding that this infinite, or eternal, which is at bottom life, and which we carry with us, or rather which we are, must or can be separated from matter and time. A good argument would be the difficulty of explaining the identity of the law, except by referring it to a transcendental reality. But this transcendental reality, far from being an explanation, offers much greater difficulties. It certainly contradicts every presentment or interpretation that we generally, and not superficially, make of life and of reality; or—and this is the truth—it is but a very vague hypothesis, which thought cannot closely follow, nor explain in its consequences and possibilities. On the other hand, it is not an extravagant, improbable hypothesis, if we explain this difficulty, namely, the identity

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of the law, not by having recourse to the concept of a transcendental reality, but by admitting a *novelty*,—which is not a monstrosity, but belongs to the natural order more than anything else ; in whose formation anew there is formed anew every intrinsic (essential, universal) value, every intrinsic necessity of activity.

98.—How is this novelty possible, so simple and rich, ready to integrate itself in every truth, interpreter of the past and prescient of the future, with fulness of wisdom, yet always so light, pure, underived and whole? . . . Even if we recur in thought to poorer forms of unity and totality, and consider that the principle, the novelty itself, enriches itself only in history, by its own traces, i.e., by its material (—whose being no less, according to what we may conjecture, renews, originates itself unceasingly . . .), yet is not this novelty almost inadmissible, and like a portent? Certainly to him who wishes to explain life starting from senseless inert elements, like the dice of infantile games, to him this novelty, the perpetual novelty of principles, the wealth and power of this novelty, cannot but seem somewhat repellent, like a surprise, a fact hard to reconcile with a rigorous scientific system. And undoubtedly this novelty is something marvellous ; but marvellous is life, and this we must bear in mind, unless we vainly endeavour to interpret life and the real through inadequate systems.—We must not forget that the marvellous, the “miracle”—I do not mean anything supernatural—is everywhere, not in the moving of objects at a distance, or in other unusual phænomena, but in every reasoning, in every unity of thought, in every phrase or word.

The same necessities return, since the novelty cannot but be novelty, unity, etc. The eternal law returns in

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every act (individuation, expression, creation); but without the act, without those creations, individuations, expressions, it has no existence (no being of any sort); it forms itself anew in the very act of their forming. Nor is there any other explanation, except the new origin of intrinsic motives and necessities in every act. There is no other explanation of the infinite identity or universality of the intrinsic necessities, except their intrinsicity.

99.—There is a doctrine which affirms an extra-phænomenal reality, and regards as secondary the phænomenal reality, and the making. There is another doctrine which likewise affirms a metempirical reality as the only one, and while denying the phænomenal reality, yet affirms as a true and absolute reality the actual, the act of creating, of making. Those who defend this second conception deny the reality of any condition which is not gathered up into the actuality of the act; they are therefore compelled to adopt the hypotheses of an unreal "empirical subject," and, however unwillingly, of an a-personal *logos*. But they do not dwell on these concepts, nor enter deeply into them; and this is, as I believe, because these concepts are not reconcilable with the other concept which they at the same time luminously maintain, namely, that the spirit only exists in its actuations, that the act of creating, of making, i.e., the actual, is real, is the reality.

100.—Whenever Gentile considers and investigates the act in its novelty he takes his terms and images from the empirical, spatial and temporal reality. His philosophy, more than any other, confirms in a philosophic range of vision the reality of creation, and the reality of the act or of the synthesis. Yet, after the reality of that which is

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creation and of that which is act has been confirmed, as something not illusory, it becomes more than ever an unintelligible proceeding to deny concrete time, i.e., a consciousness of activity, of becoming, and abstract time and space, i.e., all co-existence and succession of several acts, all relation of reciprocal condition between several acts; to deny that several actual acts, several subjects co-exist, or succeed one another. To deny the reality of time we must in the first place deny the truth of the concepts that life holds most dear. If, therefore, Gentile, who has accorded to these concepts full rights in the realm of philosophy, wishes his propositions to be true, only provided we conceive the reality as a metempirical subject, there is in them a contradiction which, because it is obvious, is not on that account negligible.

101.—Bosanquet rightly says that making, creating, only concern temporal existence. But according to his conception there is another existence; there is a non-temporal reality (the absolute). He re-states and partly corrects a conception now become classical, which I find most clearly and briefly expressed in Green's *Prolegomena to Ethics*, where, however (as I think) the error is most apparent. "There must be eternally such a subject which is all that the self-conscious subject, as developed in time, has the possibility of becoming; in which the idea of human spirit, or all that it has in itself to become, is completely realised," "... He (God) is all which the human spirit is capable of becoming." (*Op. cit.*, § 187).

Against this assumption it has been urged that if the whole were already given, the motive power, God, would neither be free nor a creator—that a definitive good would have neither meaning nor value; it would be wanting in that which is life, the spirit of life: "the immortal in the

mortal," "the generating in the beautiful" (in the form) (cf. §§ 77 and 52); and other arguments.

102.—The supposition that principles exist before or without experience and phænomena is, in my opinion, an arbitrary and obscure hypothesis; not an explanation; it rather attributes, it seems to me, the greatness, the force, the reality of the act to a reality more or less unknown; it diverts our attention from that value which we are able to investigate in the present. If, on the other hand, we consider the cause as immanent in the act—yet in "an act" for which the claim is made that it is not the empirical or phænomenal reality itself—these difficulties partly vanish, but partly are increased all the more through the contradiction of a living being that is at one and the same time affirmed, and denied in the reality of his affections and presuppositions.

But if it were necessary to choose between the two conceptions it would be more reasonable to admit with Bosanquet a transcendental reality, and, on the other hand, a secondary reality of living beings, of experience and of creation, and therefore also the secondary reality of history. The reality as a metempirical subject, when at the same time we recognise an absolute immanence of every spiritual law in the form, is too contradictory and unintelligible. This second conception marks a step in advance of inestimable worth because of the truths which it affirms, and which are not invalidated, or, in so far as they are not invalidated, by the false distinction between the empirical and metempirical subject; but this notwithstanding, the first conception is clearer and stronger. I shall confine myself now to a few considerations which regard the first conception.

103.—Liberty and (spiritual) necessity cannot be

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distinguished. They are two names which denote one and the same reality, and equally mean that a given activity is really activity, spirit. Now, if the act of making, or creating (which is held to be free, and whose concept indeed is understood to be the same as that of liberty), is temporal, as is admitted, it seems that also necessity—this word perhaps expresses better, and throws into higher relief the reality of the principle and of the principles in their value of universality—cannot be otherwise regarded, since it would be impossible to separate necessity—spiritual necessity—from the act of making.

For instance, liberty and necessity are one and the same thing in art. The more living the inspiration, the more the artist knows his liberty, and at the same time knows the act as necessary ; the freer it is, the more it is necessary !

Liberty and necessity are one and the same thing in duty. To do the most and the best according to, and, in a certain sense, beyond one's strength ; to sacrifice one's own particular and exclusive interest ; these attitudes or acts do not depend on a mere arbitrary act. He who purposes to make a given effort or a given sacrifice may change his attitude and adopt a diametrically opposite course as soon as he has an opportunity of playing a better part, unless such a purpose arise from a demand or exigency of high value. In order that what is called *arbitrium* may have the meaning that is generally attributed to it, when its practical and ethical value is considered, it is necessary that there should be implied in it—even in an act of *arbitrium* such that it is apparently the most empty initiative, a thing "willed," not felt—there must be implied in it an uplifting of ourselves to a view less strictly personal ; that is, to a consciousness of

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activity as an infinite, as a necessity ; a thought less irresponsible and ephemeral, that always implies and expresses activity in its identity and infinity. Grace and *arbitrium* are not distinguishable, except from a secondary point of view. A grace, such as not to be an activity of the living being, would be an imposition ; it would not be life . . . ; there is no grace except the justifying grace. Nor does an empty *arbitrium* exist, absolutely ; and where one would least suppose, there is in *arbitrium* the liberty, the thought which is borne up into the eternal, into the necessary of activity.

On the other hand, it is obvious that duty, even in this its necessity—by reason of which one feels that it could never be evaded—is *free*, that is, there is in the act a something that might be wanting—a grace, a merit ; otherwise the act would have neither value nor meaning ; it would not have the peculiar value of an act of duty. It is *free*, in so far any act may claim to be so.

Necessity is liberty itself in the infinite of its principle ; it is the actuation of activity in its intrinsicity, where intrinsicity itself is a value and motive. Every intrinsic process of making is at once liberty and necessity. Only from a secondary point of view, when we consider subjects as opposed to each other, or, as regards an internal struggle, where the subject identifies itself now with its most explicit, now with its deepest thought, is it right that there should be a distinction in the use of these words, and that their meanings should be different and sometimes opposite.

If, then, the act of making, of creating—which is liberty—is temporal, on the other hand I do not see how it is justifiable to distinguish the conception of necessity from the conception of creation—a distinction so radical and

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fraught with such important consequences. And by necessity I mean also the universal, the eternal, the intrinsic, which are inseparable concepts, or, more essentially, are—with reference to different problems—the names, the different expressions, of one and the same concept.

104.—What becomes of the law—the principle and the principles, every original necessity—without history? I imagine a docile person ready to accept as a verity any opinion whatever, whether political, moral or philosophical, if expressed with a certain vigour, and characterised by the ring of truth. In that *ring of truth* is nevertheless the law—activity in its original and eternal motive-principles. The said person is apt to understand everything, his synthesis is ready and easy, but being somewhat of a poor character . . . In this example it clearly appears that the principle, which in its original values and necessities forms all the practical and theoretical contents of our experience, is not in itself that wonderful independent or pre-existing Deity; if the law, the principle is thus impoverished, when the problems of a given moment of history are not gathered up, and profoundly lived through, when they are not much more than an opportunity for its actuation and unfolding. We find here a principle relatively poor, though one of infinite integration, in the thought of this person who is ready to accept as true the grossest rubbish, the most onesided affirmations which are not true except in a superficial and transient view, that is oblivious of everything. If, then, the principle be sundered from the wealth of temporal existence, does it not lose precisely that greatness which one wishes to find in a pre-existence, or in some sort of inferred extra-temporal reality, belonging to it? To

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what is the very spirit of the spirit reduced, outside history, without the material wherewith it is formed and unfolded? In the forms known to us, a nothing, or else a nameless docility.

The material is much more than an opportunity for the actuating of activity (cf. Ch. I). By material I mean also events and problems, historically, and therefore temporally and spatially, individuated. The weightier the material and the more serious the problems that are taken up—problems not undergone, but lived through—the more living and genuine, the higher and stronger, and, in a certain sense, the truer is the spontaneity which the spirit finds in them. The problems taken up are new life, new principle. Thus, though serious and difficult problems may weaken the wings of verse, nevertheless, if for so great an effort activity loses naught of its actuality, if so much "material" may be spiritualised (won, subjectivated, activated, gathered up, liberated, or whatever other term may be used), all the higher and stronger does the poetry rise upward; problems and difficulties of every kind do but constitute fresh force and impetus to verse, and are one and the same thing with its value.

Where there is no individual there also is no eternal, no silence, no shining darkness, no other mystical or rationalist figure of the original principle, that is, of activity, in the necessity and originality of its values and abstract forms.

105.—The reason of the different interpretations, of the different doctrines, is seen, for instance, in the following image, where the poet evokes as it were the creative principle, the good genius of his poetry, in the figure of a gentle fluteplayer :

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Every voice in thy music is found
and in every voice art thou
diffused, when thou openest and shuttest the al-
ternate stops.

It seems almost as if thou alone dost move the
things,
while thou dost delight alone
in obeying the eternal motions.

(D'Annunzio, *Laudi, III., Il Fanciullo.*)*

It is true that the gentle fluteplayer *obeys*—and for this reason the thought arises of an obedience to a higher principle or reality, which in some way exists *per se* ; but he obeys only in so far as we individuate him either in his will, in his *arbitrium*, or in some more reflex and more explicit thought of his, or in his corporal and visible form; not in so far as we recognise him in the musical thought, where the divine springs issue. In him that more explicit thought, or that external activity, willingly leans upon this infinite becoming, that is, upon the thought which makes itself infinitely according to one law. And if we identify the child (*il fanciullo*) with one of his external acts of will, it is certain that we grasp only a small part of him ; and his song, or the laws of his song, appear to us a transcendent reality, of which we soon make a definite and independent reality. But if we identify him with that song of his we shall surely more profoundly and truly identify the reality of him. . .

And if I further consider this song, I find that it is the

* Ogni voce in tuo suono si ritrova
e in ogni voce sei
sparso, quando apri e chiudi i fôri alterni.
Par quasi che tu sol le cose muova
mentre solo ti bei
nell'obbedire ai movimenti eterni.

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original activity in the rich domain of discursive, plastic and sonorous presentments, and that it does not pre-exist, and that nothing whatever of that which is properly principle, activity, pre-exists; and, speaking more precisely, I find that in that forming of the thought according to "the eternal motions," it is not necessary to infer their existence before the thought, before the song which expresses itself in that form, in that material of expression; it is needless to infer their previous or in any way independent existence. And considering the obscurity of this hypothesis, and the difficulties which it encounters, and considering in addition that it does not derive its cogency from being the only solution of a necessary problem, the fact of our having recourse to it seems to me all the more unjustified.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CONCEPT

106.—A concept is the *infinite* of a perception. The concept of a given value or aspect of activity is the *infinite* of that value or aspect.

Every conscious moment, however brief, *qua* actuality, is an infinite : an infinite necessity of that moment itself, an infinite identity ; a principle of interpreting the reality. For every conscious moment is infinitely “ necessary ”—in a certain sense, infinitely “ possible ”—because of its intrinsicality, through which, in a limitless number of cases, it can form itself anew, being ever different, and yet identifiable ; and this intrinsicality—originality and universality—of its formation, is, in its forming, an actual value ; and is the concept : in it and through it a given expressive moment is a concept.

In fact the concept is *activity*. Yet the word “ concept ” is sometimes preferred when there is a reference to the forms of theoretical thought—the “ concept ” is the *infinite* of the expression, as the “ principle ” is the *infinite* of the individuation—and from a point of view absolutely introspective. Further, the word “ concept,” is preferred in so far as attention is drawn to a particular material in which activity is actuated. The concept is always activity, as a principle of integration, as an absolute ; but we use the word “ concept,” and no other name of the universal, with particular reference to the material,

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without which activity does not actuate itself, does not exist ; a concept is the infinite or the universal * of a given element of sensible material, of a given moment of expression, of a given aspect or value of activity.

107.—This reality of the concept is necessarily noticed also by psychologists, but how disguised ! and how little is its value recognised ! The concept is presented in many forms, and called by many different names : as, e.g., a shadow, a veil, or a prolongation, of the expression ; a tendency ; a “ confused idea ” ; “ une infinité émotionnelle ” ; “ une passivité dirigée ” ; a halo or “ fringe ” ; a perception of affinity or of resemblance ; indetermination, original indetermination ; virtue or capacity of expansion ; intonation, rhythm, “ strain,” “ Stimmung,” etc. A shadow, a veil of the expression. But what a shadow ! The concept is very different ! The concept in a given expression is that which more in general is the activity, the principle, in a given individuation. *The concept is in the expression as creation is in the living being, as humanity is in man.*

108.—Just as man “ loses himself ” (his particularity), because he lifts himself to the infinite, to the intrinsic of creation, so the form loses itself, its particularity, in the infinite, in the intrinsic, of the concept which it is realising.

The form, if it does not soon dissolve, and give place to another, is a limitation of liberty, therefore an error, one-sidedness : since activity does not actuate itself in its value in full spontaneity and originality, and therefore in the fulness of all its intrinsicity ;† and it passes out of life, out of its principle.

*Cf. Chap. V.

†Of course, not that “ fulness ” of actuation, with which a given measure, or limit, of completeness, or of perfection, may be filled, nor in general that fulness which implies a deterministic conception.

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The form cannot be separated from the forming of the concept, where the concept almost makes the form disappear in a complete transparency. Deprived of that reality, which it has in so far as it is expression, in so far as it is one and the same thing with the forming of the concept, the form is no longer anything but an incumbrance of clogging matter, or else it consists of fragmentary thoughts, that is, of other concepts which are usually inferior with regard to the concept expressed.

The expression is always in its actuality a concept. Whatever reality is explicitly or implicitly gathered up into the unity of the expression, this can only be gathered up because it is "identified," "made transparent," through the intrinsic of activity. Only through the essence, only by essentialising, can there be a unity of thought—that is an expression. Nor would any continuity of thought be otherwise possible: if every past moment of the expression, if every element of the expression, were not abandoned as regards its form, and were not actual as a concept, that is, if it were not identified with the activity which conceptualises all its conditions. The form divides; only the concept unites.

109.—Every element of material, even the minutest, is concept, is meaning, is content, is activity; especially in the thought of the artist (V. Chap. I). Every expressive element, even the minutest, gives rise to concepts, provided it be taken up into thought, into the originality of the act. This applies to fragments of sensible matter—to stimuli, to conditions which are known through relation. Still more does it apply to moments of expression in their meaning.

For instance, even in a prose period there are not only properly discursive concepts, nor only sonorous ones,

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but also *orthographic concepts*. The actual moment of expression draws from the past moments, and from every detail of the sensible material, and from every condition, its own concepts—some more, some less inherent in the material itself of the expression.

It is only thus that the unity of form and of content, the unity of the material and of the concept becomes intelligible ; as an adequate expression for which in non-symbolic art the sensible material does not appear as something separate, or in any way distinct from the concept expressed in it. For every detail of the material is, in a certain sense, a principle of activity, a ground for the development of thought, for the actuation of thought in its original values and abstract necessities.

It is also for this reason that the profound unity of a language is formed. This is because in a given spoken language every single word is the material of infinite concepts, discursive, sonorous, plastic, etc. ; and also because, on the other hand, each of them has been formed and is formed in the concept of the others (now more, now less deeply, according to the special character of the language). It is not that there is any previous formation and existence of the innumerable concepts of the other innumerable words ; but at the formation of a given word, activity, according to what is its effort and vocation, infinitely conceptualises and identifies them, in their minutest details.

Nor is it otherwise that, for instance, there arises a certain harmony in a strophe, provided it be not a grouping of unlike things, images and sounds, which are without union, harmony or any deep connection ; in it also we may perceive a conceptualisation, or, as it may likewise be called, a *subjectivation* of every element ; which sub-

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jection is, however, a spontaneity—or spiritual necessity—of formations (*objectivity*).

110.—How do concepts form themselves? Concepts are not formed by abstracting, or by extracting, or by “picking out” that which several objects have in common. The qualities of things are revealed unexpectedly in the perceiving or comparing of the things themselves to him who is least skilled in syllogisms, by a spontaneity and liveliness of thought, in which such an operation of “extraction” does not exist; and only a theory no less clumsy than obstinate can regard it as implicit therein.

But allowing that such an operation of extraction or abstraction took place, to what would it lead? If a quality A be extracted from an object, nothing would make us believe that the quality A extracted from one object and the quality A extracted from another are one and the same quality; the common quality or character would never be recognised, and no idea of a common quality would ever arise.

The most unreasonable, barren-minded man is often found to be the keenest syllogiser. But it is not by syllogising that concepts are found; to syllogise is not logic. The processes to which I allude have very little value either in themselves or in practice, and do not in the least constitute intelligence. Concepts are not found by abstracting; but by the awakening in us of the sense or consciousness of origin—i.e., of activity as origin, of life as origin—in the consideration or perception of a given object, whence the latter, in a given aspect, derives from activity the characters of necessity and of eternity; that is, this object—in a given quality—becomes an infinite identity, an infinite possibility, an intrinsicity or identity which is not limited to any given case.

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If in the starry heavens we gaze at an orb, we see it—now more, now less, in different ways and according to our knowledge and mentality—in its infinity, in its concept, that is in its quality *qua* star ; whence the perception of the star is at one and the same time the idea of infinite stars, of infinite lights or lamps ; it is a “ transparency ” of infinite stars.

We see a child, a flower, and the spring ; and there arises in us the idea of birth. There immediately arises, or better, there forms itself in us the idea of birth, as a sense or consciousness of life.

The forming of concepts is the becoming conscious of activity in the originality and in the *necessity* of its values.

Two images brought together are a new figure, and express that which neither of them expresses ; and in any, even the smallest variation, e.g., of language, that relation between the two images may be lost, that relation of words from which there issued and in which was expressed the concept (cf. § 2). This occurs because we do not derive the common concept of the two images by individuating it in each of them separately, according to an extrinsic process ; but those very images are a “ principle ” of life, a “ principle ” of intelligence, and, to be more precise, activity forms itself in them, intending, according to what is its effort or vocation, to identify them. Nor are they identified otherwise than by proceeding towards the essence, by touching a degree of deeper subjectivity, or essentiality, in the intrinsic—in the eternal—of activity. This is a spontaneous process of activity, that is of intelligence, in each image, in each word (or colour or other material of expression), in every particularity of expression ; and not an extrinsic process, deliberate and voluntary ; it is really *a value of intrin-*

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sicality, or of eternity ;* it is not ability, nor an exercise of patience.

III.—The question is put how we can explain a “ perception of resemblance ” and a “ perception of difference ” between several objects, between one moment of the perceiving activity itself and the next. The perception of a difference and of a resemblance is a moment similar to the perception of a quality and to the revealing of a concept ; except that in the former case the contrast between individuation and the universal is more pronounced. In taking up an element of matter activity turns it into a principle of interpreting the reality, into a limitless transparency. On the other hand, every time the violence and exclusiveness of the individuations, the specifying of activity in its material conditions and according to its own concepts, that is, every time something fragmentary or exclusive loses this its character, because it is gathered up into that unity or totality—when this happens, then there comes about the perception or sensation of a resemblance. Similarly, the perception of a difference, which differs from the perception of a resemblance only through a different intensity, and from secondary points of view, takes place at the moment when thought reduces to unity, gathers up into a unity, into an unlimited transparency, a thing newly individuated. The greater the violence of the individuation—the power of analysis, the vivacity of the attitudes, the force of the stimulus, etc.—and on the other hand the greater the exigency of unity, of an unlimited transparency—every particularity “ identified ” in the intrinsicality of the values and forms of knowing ; the more the thought is enriched and amplified, and those “ relations ” take place

*Cf. § 54.

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which are its substance ; and in the first place a revealing, an actuating, ever new and original, of differences and resemblances.

112.—*Abstract and Concrete Concepts.* Between an abstract and a concrete concept there is no gap. There certainly would be, if the abstract concept were really nothing more than an average, or else a case constructed, or an individual among a thousand. But, as a rule, even when we wish to consider, for instance, "the concept of a house," "the concept of a quadruped," "the concept of a horse," "the concept of a tree," "the concept of a star," we yet do not regard "the house," etc., as an abstract average, as nothing but a resultant or an approximation : but we consider it as a fruitful type, full of suggestions, of possibilities. The abstract concept is ultimately to be resolved into concrete concepts : into qualities, which are concrete concepts. The tree is intelligible to us through values and attitudes which are subjective and intrinsic or universal : for instance, the freshness of growth, the hardness, the resistance ; the horse is intelligible through its speed ;* the star through its being luminous. And these concepts ("swiftness," "luminousness") are likewise infinite, and in them we interpret endlessly the real, and live our life, while they renew themselves, ever different, yet identifiable, recognisable. The distinction between the concept of a given type or class of things, and the concept of activity, or of a value or form of activity, may be misused and misunderstood, and lead into error : the type-concept is not a dead construction, but, as a rule,

*Cf. as an instance of the origin of words according to concepts, according to essential relationships : "—To *ak* (to be sharpened, to sting), extended to mean swiftness, is referred also the Latin *equus* . . ." F. Zambaldi, *Dizionario Etimologico Italiano*, Città di Castello, 1919, p. 10.

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it has, now more, now less, the light of the concept. It is seldom that we find an abstract concept which is nothing more than an average. The very terms with which this figure is usually described, as, for instance, "type," "model," "example," the very term "concept," suggest a value which it would be difficult to explain in any other way except for the reason that the concept readily actuates itself and finds its home also in these frames: except for the reason that the latter really have a conceptual value.

Every concept may be abstract, or concrete: an average, or a "possible." It all depends on the intensity with which it is thought. The generic or the general is often confounded with the universal. For instance, *man* may mean the average man, or it may mean the human being, him to whom nothing human is foreign. *Colour* may be conceived, for instance, as not white and not black, or also in relation to physical conditions and effects: it may be conceived abstractly, not substantially, (I refer to the substantiality of thought, of the soul). Or, on the other hand, we may view it as an intrinsic, as an infinite "possible," as a principle of the soul, like light, but having some richness of its own, in a living presentment; for instance: ". . . But mortal life, after the beautiful day of youth has disappeared, is never again coloured with another light nor with another dawn." (Leopardi, *Il Tramonto della Luna*).* Here we find a concept of colour which is not abstract, but concrete; yet not a given colour, but all colours; any colour whatever, which, taken up into activity, is therefore an infinite presence, and an infinite possibility. Similarly, every

*Ma la vita mortal, poi che la bella
Giovinezza sparì, non si colora
D'altra luce giammai, nè d'altra aurora.

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given colour, if for the painter it is a note of life, full of developments, of relationships, a concrete concept, is for others an abstract inference. For some persons *space* is a mere condition, for others, or for the same at a different moment, it is an expression of the infinite of activity. Space is always *beautiful* for an artist ; it is origin, activity in its infinite principle, necessary, free and plastic ; the silent power of synthesis ; an unlimited identity, in which everything is made transparent. For space (in so far as it is perceived) is not, as some pretend, a complicated construction, but a sense of origin, of life : the impression of space is simple, immediate, new, a novelty of life ; although space be constructed, known through complicated relations, and experiences, through long and varied ways, in the last resort the impression of space is something simple and new because it springs from our liberty. But also the space-condition may be a concept ; the concept itself of conditionality. In reality there is no place where the concept is not found ; every term may be a concrete, or abstract, concept, and this largely depends on the greater or less intensity of the thought. Every concrete concept, for instance, the concept of charity, the very concept of activity, may be conceived abstractly, as a datum, outside every relation. In this case the concept of " activity " is in fact falsified, lost as regards its reality, as regards its truth ; but also it would seem that the concept of " tree " must lose all meaning, if the tree is not thought of in its qualities, which are operative concepts ; i.e., they are activity, a principle of relation.

113.—*The Concept and Concepts.* I have spoken of the concept and of concepts without distinction ; as well as of " concrete concepts." But strictly speaking only *the* concept is really concrete. When we conceive a given

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moment of activity as a particular concept we begin to lose its reality, we begin to abstract from its whole and true concept. For instance, charity in its actuality is not only charity, but an actuating of activity as an absolute, i.e., as an exigency of an integration in every intrinsicality of activity. To speak of the concept of charity is at once to lose something of its notion. Thus all the qualities of things, all the verbs of activity, in their reality—whether as practical acts, or as moments of knowledge—are activity, are an exigency of an integration in every value and form, in every concept of activity, for which the place and time offer a ground or occasion, and, implicitly, in every intrinsicality, absolutely; that is, they are not particular concepts, but they are *the* concept. In the concreteness of the reality every moment is *the* concept, an integrity of life, which can be viewed as a concept distinct from other concepts only after subsequently reflecting on the particular subject-matter in which the concept is actuated or expressed. Nothing is more repellent to consciousness than an absolute rule or limit such as to exclude in the concrete case a complete, supreme judgment; this limit turns consciousness into a dead thing, and excludes it.* And the concept is precisely this principle of activity, through which, at a given moment, we aim at an interpretation, identification, or implication, beyond every given limit. The concepts

*This truth is investigated with profound insight and realised with unusual clearness by Renan, in reference to given historical events. Cf. for instance: “. . . L’homme vraiment vertueux. . . n’a rien tant en horreur que le pédantisme morale. Pour se laver à se propres yeux du soupçon de duperie, il a besoin de douter par moments de sa propre oeuvre, de ses propres mérites. Celui qui prétend faire son salut par des recettes infaillibles, lui semble l’ennemi capital de Dieu. Le pharisaïsme devient ainsi quelque chose de pire que le vice. . .”—*Histoire des origines du Christianisme*, Vol. V, *Les Evangiles*, p. 8.

take part in this value of the concept : but they are uncertain figures ; and only in so far as they are *the* concept have they the value to which they lay an essential claim.

114.—Hence we must also avoid the error of considering the concept as the infinite or the universal of a given reality, independently of the novelty of the expression in which this reality is actual. The concept, or the quality, does not exist abstractly, that is, without activity, and the latter exists only in the novelty of the expression.

It is only the new moment of the expression that decides which concept is to emerge out of the indefinite possibilities of the past moment and of every condition. The possibilities of any moment of expression are indefinite. Thus the qualities of a given individual are indefinite and inexhaustible ; and it is only in the concrete case that they are formed and specified. The character of a person forms itself *anew* little by little in the “ material ” of his changing physical conditions and of new occasions and circumstances. Similarly, the concept forms itself *anew*. And to attain this formation, the happy novelty of expression or individuation is needed ; the concept, the quality, otherwise does not exist. A given concept, or character, does not develop itself, does not create anything. The identity, the integrating principle, is in the novelty of the new act. The concept, in so far as it is active, in so far as it truly exists, is in the novelty of the act, of the expression.

115.—All this is unintelligible, unless we turn our attention to a fundamental problem, from which the study of philosophy takes, or may take, its beginning (cf. § 62). Is there something *essential* ? How is it possible that there should be something *essential* ? Why does this word *essential* exist ? How is it that what is *essential* is

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universal? In what sense do *essential* and *universal* mean the same thing? It is especially in poetic thought and in art in general that we see and understand that what is essential is also universal:—not universal from a superficial point of view which allows us to ascertain that a given character is in all places where there is life and where there is material; but universal in an immediate and profound sense, through a universality which is primarily a value, and only secondarily a presumption of a universality in time and space. He who sees truths revealing themselves, all the more luminous and powerful in proportion as they are essential—whether in art, in science, or in practice—is led to consider the reality of the concept: the reality of an original sense of life; essential and universal because original; always renascent through an intrinsic causality of its own; infinitely identical; *one*—though in the tireless travail of contrary values.*

116.—*Induction and deduction.* The processes of formal logic have a content and an explanation in that very originality in which the concept and the concepts are formed, and which they, according to a common erroneous conception, ought to substitute. I shall confine myself to translating into *truer* terms the terms of formal logic relating to induction and deduction.

If *induction*, according to extrinsic logic, is a process through which from one or more cases we infer a constant rule, according to substantial logic it is the act through which in one individuation, or by comparing several individuations, we discover a principle (concept, character). If *deduction*, according to extrinsic logic, is a process by which we apply a rule to a new case, according

*Concerning the problem of the "unity" and integrity of thought in its values and forms, cf. also §§ 119-123.

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to substantial logic it is the finding of a new case, that is to say, a new individuation of a principle (character, concept), of which we have already some knowledge.

Consequently, in substantial logic, indeed in the reality of activity, in the reality of thought, induction and deduction are forms of one and the same process, only differing from each other in degree. Both mean our becoming conscious of a given principle (activity, character, concept, essence, etc.) in the individuation. Only in induction that which interests most, that which forms the most interesting discovery, is the principle (for instance, "bud," "baby," "spring" are a ground—an opportunity a material, not an origin—for the concept of birth, of the novelty of birth; similarly, from "benefactor," "succour" arises the concept of *goodness*; from "man," "strife," "snare," "defence," that of *good faith*). In deduction the principle is already known in some form, and that which is chiefly brought into prominence is the new case in which the said principle is individuated or the said concept is expressed and perfectly known. Every presentment is—in different measure—the conceptualisation of a case, and at one and the same time the application or exemplification of a concept; hence induction and deduction. But undoubtedly these two terms are chiefly significant in connection with extrinsic and practical "logic", as *schemata* of the constructive will.

But in so far as they are such *schemata*, they do not in fact throw any light on reasoning; they do not constitute any reality of consciousness. The light which they throw, the reality they possess, lies in the originality of the act, in a unity which is intrinsicality, concept (cf. § 71).

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When we say that all men are mortal, that Titus is a man, and deduce therefrom that Titus is mortal, the conclusion is only of value, because, and in so far as, in it the humanity and mortality of Titus are actuated—are lived through—at one point. In the conclusion everything has to be doubted, and renewed in a thought which is free and entire. If anyone, after having gathered together under one formula the things he has already considered, supposes that *from that formula* he is able to advance in his reasoning, he is mistaken. That formula, as an "objective datum," outside a living and single thought, outside the original thought in which it was formed, would lend itself to too many interpretations, and would not be a sure basis for further advance. That formula is of value only if it recalls to our mind in their entirety the things considered, the concept which little by little we have formed ; if it is really a thought in which the things considered are gathered up in the sense in which they were considered ; and because it therefore allows through its aid the new thought—the conclusion—more conveniently to gather up the past. And this schematic form ("all men are mortal," etc.) contributes in no way to the demonstration of the assumption that Titus is mortal—as I have remarked several times. After we have posited "man" in the sense of "mortal man" it necessarily follows that Titus is "mortal," if we grant that he is a "man" . . . But these processes have nothing to do with that which is a non-formal conviction ; with that which is truth. Truth cannot be led by the bridle ; it is a principle essentially free ; it is a *principle of unlimited integration and identification in the original, in the intrinsic* ; and to it is repugnant every proceeding that has something external and constrictive about it, that is not

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original and free. Nevertheless, the formal *schema* is not always useless: it often in part conceals, yet partly expresses a process of substantial logic; that is, like the forms themselves of language, it is a material for the expression of such process.

CHAPTER IX

THE UNITY AND TRANSPARENCY OF THOUGHT

117.—The term “unity” suggests the idea of an entity in face of other entities, while the reality of a thought is a limitless unity. The term “unity” is not, however, to be understood here in this meaning, as of an entity in contradistinction to others in a series or in another system, but in the meaning of “totality,” of “an indivisible whole.”

The reality of a thought—a many twinkling transparency, a transparency of endless lucidity—in what does it consist? The value-principles of individuation, and of universality (identity in the essence, in the intrinsic, or universal of activity); activity in these its inseparable values, which are yet not altogether reducible to each other; this original light, this value of light, which is individuation and intrinsicity; this motive-value; this active, creative “pleasure”; this “prime,” this underived cause, and, as I believe, this cause in those two causes, in those two values; the values of individuation and universality weave—so to say—this transparent reality. On one side the eagerness of the form; the vigour, the impetus, the exclusiveness, the oblivion, the pride of the expression; the activity which individuates and differentiates itself, whether through the conditions of its actuation, or by virtue of its own essence (cf. §§ 46-47); on the other side the intolerance of every limit,

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the including or implying of every thing, the exigency of identifying itself with every thing and with every reason, the exigency of an absolute identification with and through the values and abstract forms of activity, which identification ought not to be obstructed by any particularity of the form formed, or by any exclusiveness of the expression ; the not losing the integrity of the spirit, in any formula or remnant where a given problem becomes a game bereft of all seriousness and power ; but rather the finding of the unlimited principle again and again in the intimate principle of the act, that is, in an intrinsicality, which exists in so far as it rises against every limit or absolute relativity (V. § 61) ; the material made concept ; the expression full of its eternity ; the expression lost in a transparency—intrinsicality, necessity—beyond every given limit : in these terms of discursive thought it seems to me that we can represent, in its essence, the reality of thought—as it is known by everyone, now more, now less, and according to different tendencies and vocations.

The subject is activity which identifies, that is, which forms itself in the material by conceptualising and identifying ; and the deeper the subject which identifies in the identity of the principle—" deep " because in the undiminished richness, in the concreteness of the reality, the subject finds this identity—and the richer the material of the particulars, each of which is the recalling, the actuation, of an originality and a necessity that are not particular, not conditional or relative : the more *the identity*—which is transparency and light—is present, and the more a thought is real, spiritually substantial.

The universal is more commonly recognised in stronger contrast with individuality, in more evident forms (cf.

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§§ 66 and 60); while, on the contrary, the universal—that is the infinite, that is, activity, *qua* necessity and originality, which is infinite, and actual in this infinity—which forms inevitably every unity, is only known in an intimate harmony of the act, in the non-existence of internal contradiction, in the transparency of the act of thought, in its intimate character, and in a profound necessity of its own ; and this value, or these values, easily pass unnoticed in a superficial view.

118.—How an original motive is the *reality* of a thought and its value, is made particularly clear in a work of art.

“ The columns support the architrave ; therefore they are necessary, therefore they are justified ; hence in this construction there is unity, harmony, beauty.” This reasoning, which properly belongs to a gross and puerile system of æsthetics, nevertheless conceals a truth, which it does not succeed in grasping, but from which it probably springs. It is certainly mistaken. Acting on this criterion, namely that of making the columns serve the architrave, and of justifying everything according to its utility or its necessity, numberless architects may set to work, and do not produce anything which is a work of art, anything which is thought and unity. But *the subordinating* of one moment of thought to another, this properly belongs to thought, this is a spiritual “ prime,” which carries the substantiality, the necessity and the light of originality. A living, fresh thought is all full of that subordinating, of subordinations—and exaltations ;—all of them woven in the web of ceaseless change. In a unity of thought, so long as there is thought, every individuation—every moment of the expression—is perpetually lost in its concept or essence. Which concept

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in reality does not exist except in the individuations or moments ; but in every individuation it gathers up the others, and this it cannot do except in so far as it is concept, that is, through the infinite of the individuation itself—through the concept, the quality : that is, because a given form is subordinated, lost in a necessity or intrinsicity transcending it. And that architectural means, by which, unpretentiously, the columns serve the end of supporting the architrave and the monument, may give opportunity for the formation of thought in one of its eternal motives, may be the expression and therefore the reality of a thought.

119.—*Concept of development.* From an approximative point of view we should say that thought could not grasp, identify with itself, new attitudes, and integrate itself in each of its values and abstract necessities, and in every specification of value, if in any one of its moments it did not contain *in some way* all the principles, values and abstract necessities, and all their specifications. Intelligence, at every moment, is a *possibility* of “all” the values and forms of intelligence. Life at every moment is a *possibility* of all life . . . For this reason it is possible for intelligence to interpret every preceding trace, and form itself in new interpretations. Where there is a moment of life, there also is a centre, a principle, of “all” the principles of life and of the abstractly objective thought.

But this concept, thus expressed, is evidently only something approximative, and requires to be explained and corrected.

120.—In every moment of life—even in the poorest “sensation”—there are already in a certain way “all” the intrinsic principles of life. Without this the reality

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would escape me, and would escape everyone, and it is the failure to understand this that gives rise to the falsest and most clumsy theories. Such is the case if we make a radical separation, a severance or a gap instead of a gradual and continuous passage between reason and sense ;—between instinct and reason ;—between the moral nature of the man and that of the child ;— of educated man and of man in the “state of nature” ;—between man and the other animals. And the harmony of the human mind would be impossible, if the original modes of the spirit were to penetrate—identify—only a part of our activity ; for instance, it would come about that if we were “reason,” that is, if we identified ourselves with it, we should not understand “the passions,” and “the senses” or any quality or aspect of things ; and *vice versa*.—“Sensation,” like “emotion,” etc., may well be a salient moment of life : the difference lies in the intensity of its identification with the real, and according to how far its spontaneity is almost independent or remote from our most intimate and profound spontaneity or originality, or identifies itself with it ; and this is only a matter of degree. Also sensation is a unity, and an infinite ; a principle of interpretation, of identification. In reality activity is always, in each of its moments an infinite, however much it differs in degree or intensity. He who speaks of “a finite world” here below, is far from the truth. The “finite,” the “relative” only belongs to a supposed multiplicity, not really thought ; provided something is a term of consciousness, that is, of activity, it has at the same time the value of activity, which is an infinite. The “finite thought,” though a very frequent expression, is a false one. Also abstractly objective thought is an infinite, in its necessity. Also a passing impression of cold or of heat ; and if I am

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told that this is a particular impression of my own, it is none the less *true, absolutely, under this* (for the rest implicit) *condition*.—If we consider the motive-values of substantial logic—for instance unity and totality, individuation, infinity, etc.—we find that they are actual in all sensation: and only more specific concepts actuate themselves, when the conditions, the material of activity, render their actuation possible. In its simplest aspect, the original principle—the law of unity and of eternity—is indeed the poorest sensation. Sensation is *light* and *necessity*; in fact, the *necessity which is light*; thus the perception, and thus the presentment. The differences of intensity, of height, of richness, are only those of degree. It seems to me that all the deepest sense and cognition of life agree in this concept (cf. §§ 49 and 50).

Of course, the “sense” in its greatest poverty cannot be known, except in the way in which it is likewise possible to know activity in forms remote to us, of which we have knowledge more from supposition than through identification. No living being, and no thought, whether ours or that of others, can be absolutely reached in its irrevocable novelty and individuality: and a sensation will be all the more renewed and transformed when we identify ourselves with it, with our mind absorbed in a new problem, when we meditate on it, when we gather it up into a critical thought, which aims at forming a judgment about it. Nevertheless, who will deny that, for instance, a sensation, in so far as pleasurable or painful, is a profound identification with our most explicit, and with our least explicit, consciousness? And that it is something personal and impersonal? And an infinite, a principle of interpretation of the real, of our world? And that it contains, now more, now less, almost an

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exigency, with respect to which that in it which is ephemeral (e.g. in a certain sense, its manifest signs) is, as it were, humiliated : which exigency is also that infinite, that intrinsicality, that principle of transcendency ? And that it is a consciousness of something as real ?

121.—Nevertheless, the essential identity of the principle in each of its forms, in every moment of activity, certainly does not justify the proposition, according to which in every concrete, that is, actual manifestation, however secondary and minute, there are already “ all ” the original values and forms of life, of thought ; although it partly explains this proposition as an approximate truth. If all the original values and forms are there *essentially*, they are not, however, all there effectively, as they are in their specifications, developments, etc. If they are all there virtually, what is the meaning of “ virtually ” ? And in what sense is “ all ” used ? How, for instance, arises the idea, or any less conscious notion, of divisibility, except in presence of the material or of the abstract, in which it has a meaning ?

The truth is that the arising of this necessity of the abstract is a formation *ex novo*, and at the same time a principle which cannot be dissociated from thought, in so far as it forms itself in given circumstances. Thought does not arise in contradiction to this concept, and actuates it directly the occasion presents itself.

The principle only awaits the occasion, the material, for its development ; give it the material, and other characters of life will emerge, different and yet always identifiable through a certain essential identity. What, then, were they in the seed ? And how could they be there ? Was the man “ in germ ” in the baby ? in the seed ? Was the tree in the seed ? This proposition,

which frequently recurs, namely, that the present is in the past as a germ, or as a seed, is evidently inadequate, and on this point it is unnecessary to insist. "*In what way, then, are brought about new developments which confirm certain coherent necessities, if the latter were not latent in the past?*" Here is a fresh error, and in this the truth is cleared up! They were not "latent" or "virtual," they were not in germ or in the seed; and these developments are alone possible—I can conceive of no other way—through the ever new originality of life, through the forming of activity, in its intrinsic motive-values, in the present. *The development is conditioned by that which was in the past, but it is carried on by a present intrinsicity, which is not derived from the past, and was not there either in germ or in the seed; nor yet was it derived from an unknown extra-phænomenal reality.*

An ever vigilant integrity of life, original, and necessary—through that necessity which is effort, vocation, liberty: this seems to me the principle of that which is the development of a thought, and of the integrity of a thought. Hence not an integrity which exists as *virtual*. "The whole is in every act": that is, through an originality which may be said to "wait," but which, strictly speaking, is only in the act.

122.—The proposition "the whole is in every act" has various meanings or *raisons d'être*, to which it is desirable to call attention, particularly in relation to the problem under consideration—and without laying any claim to exhaustive enumeration.

(1) The said proposition may mean an external connection of things. For in every grain of sand there is a repercussion of the remotest causes, from the most distant regions of the universe.—Or else there is, in that proposi-

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tion, a reference to an intimate connection, under different points of view :

(2) Synthesis is essentially a relation (V. §§ 77 and 95). Activity is an effort, or vocation, of being the whole, in each of its moments ; of being an identification with the reality beyond every limit, an identification profound and intimate to the utmost extent ; and this self-realising identity is at the same time its value, its reality (V. §§ 57, 58). Nevertheless, it does not appear to me that this value, which appeals to an essence and an identity of principle, this value of universality and absoluteness, in so far as it is actual in a given moment, that is, in so far as it is actual in some of its concepts, values and specifications, can determine and explain the forming of a thought on new occasions and in new specifications.

(3) In every moment of activity, activity is essentially the same (cf. § 121).

(4) The act which is not lost in its forms, the act in its intimate power, rises against every relativity or limit ; it feels itself to be necessary and true ; and while endlessly it interprets in itself every reality, it is at the same time answerable for every reality, and (in that act) it invests with these attributes of necessity and truth also every less explicit presentment of the reality, and every condition, and therefore the entire universe.*

(5) The whole is in every part, in the sense that the whole is so connected with every part, that if one part be

*B. Bosanquet, *The Essentials of Logic* (reprinted in 1917), p. 34. "So long as we are awake, our whole world is conceived as real, and forms for us a single immense affirmation, which hangs from present perception, and shares its constraining power." Bosanquet limits this to the waking state : but, as the question is of a subjective value (and one not therefore less real), it does not appear to me that this limitation is justified.

destroyed the whole is destroyed. And there are different forms of connection, different kinds of systems.†

(6) The typical example of this is, however, not the unity of a thought, as some maintain. In a mechanism, if one part be removed, the whole will probably fail in its effect; and without the whole the part will have no meaning. But in a thought even a fragment of it lives; and the whole is of value also without the fragment, and may, in part, substitute it (V. § 33). Similarly, in a superficial anecdotal picture (which comes nearest to what is mechanism, and to that which is a process of thought on the inferred reality, and which chiefly interests extrinsic logic), if one figure be removed, the whole will probably become meaningless. Whereas in a painting thought out, and deeply lived through, the idea common to the different parts, that is, the concept, which is a conceptualisation (V. preceding chapter), not an omission, of particulars (average, *schema*, abstract concept), is really in every part, so that one part is of value without the others. (Of course, every part is essential to the forming of the concept, which without the former would be formed differently—it would be different . . .).

Conceptualisation, and, in conceptualising, *identity*, explain why in a vision, in a thought, the “whole” is at every point; where the “whole” is not a datum, and is not always the same “whole,” but it must be understood in the sense of an infinite, in so far as every point is a *concentration*, effort or vocation of gathering up the whole as far as possible (cf. § 59). But I fail to see that they explain the integration of activity in each of its values and forms, and in every specification of its values and forms.

(7) Identification in the eternity, or in the universality,

†Cf. B. Bosanquet, *op. cit.*, p. 49 sqq.

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of the origin may perhaps render in discursive terms the immense value of the act, and explain why or in what sense the value of activity, according to its essence, means to be "all" at each moment ; nevertheless, it does not seem to me to explain the integration of activity in its operative concepts, as virtual or implicit in this identification.

123.—If, then, activity actuates itself whole and entire in each of its principles and abstract necessities, in each of its values and specifications of value, this is not, strictly speaking, because these new values and forms are contained in the activity at any given moment, but because of a renewing originality. The actual activity only prepares the conditions for the ensuing original synthesis.

Yet a contradiction of the principle in its integrity is a cause of offence. How, then, is it that this integrity was not present, did not pre-exist, before the contradiction ? I am cold, and you say : " No, you are not cold." The contradiction surprises me, and overturns my inmost thought or consciousness of the reality ;* in that sensation was the absolute. And so it certainly is. Yet not properly that absolute which I realise at present : the value of absoluteness that I know in this second moment, in this later reflection, is not that of the first sensation—which cannot be, as, for the rest, no thought can be, recalled, reproduced absolutely in its original novelty and individuality. The case is the same, and still more clear, should you say to me : " If you are cold, this concerns nobody but yourself." For then the concept of charity, or a kindred one, rises up, or the concept of pride and of the necessary defence. Are we therefore to say that it

*Cf. B. Bosanquet, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

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existed previously? My thought integrates itself in that concept of charity: but, as I hold, *that* concept did not exist previously.

The very terms "implicit," "to imply," either mean something relative, that is, "less explicit," "to express in a manner less explicit"—since every reality of consciousness may be more or less explicit, intentional, distinct; or they may be misleading, and being used with pretended philosophic rigour they cover difficulties which they do not resolve, and imply an error. The same is true of the terms: "to include," "to explain," "to develop," etc. This is the case when by those expressions it is meant that the implicit already *is*, that what is developing already *was*. The implicit does not exist, but will exist when in the traces of the past and in face of new problems the activity actuates itself. A thought which is only "implicit," or "implied"—unless it be implied only in the above described relative sense—does *not* exist; it is a mistake to suppose that it already is in an extra-temporal condition.

In proportion as knowledge is enriched and deepened, the data, the things are new, and new also are the concepts—although on account of the identity of the principle we are right in supposing that they were already in us in some way (cf. § 120). They were in us in other forms, not properly *those*. The data are doubly new, when they themselves were unknown, and when the concepts by which they are interpreted were also unknown. In this case it happens that, at first sight, the things are not understood or give us a rude surprise.

124.—What is intelligence? Gathering up what has been said in the preceding chapters I shall now point out

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some essential traits of intelligence. Intelligence is, in the first place, broadly speaking, and in its most essential meaning, *activity*. But I wish here at the same time to draw attention to more particular concepts, and to the more frequent use of the term itself, not however of "intelligence" understood as "abstract intellect."

(1) Intelligence is life in its most eager integrity, activity in the fulness of its original values and necessities; and errors, false attitudes, onesided views mean a straying outside of activity.

(2) Intelligence is an identification with the principle and the principles, which is won through a wealth of particulars. An identification which is a conceptualisation, "subjectivation," "activation" of particulars, not a *schema* or other frame obtained by means of the omission of particulars.* An identification through which practice is profoundly and wholly gathered up by theory and identified with it. Hence it is difficult to find in the thoughts of the greatest writers and poets, apostles and men of action, the distinction, misused by false theorists as well as by badly theorising practisers, according to which practise is one thing, theory another.

(3) Other essential aspects of intelligence may be set forth in the form of precepts, as follows:

The concepts, which are an infinite and never completed process of actuation, which are values ever forming themselves, are not to be interpreted by their being in any way materialised, by their being represented as rigid conceptions, or as abstract figures of unreal perfection; the *principle* is to be understood and treasured, the principle which is always different and identical, necessary and free—not the external, unexplained *law*, not the rule,

*V. Ch. VIII. and § 122, (6).

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which is an idol of the will, an idol of false theorists. To judge according to rules means onesidedness, false security. Quite otherwise is the judgment which is truly a vigilant integrity of life, such that it is conditioned, but not given, by the past. Reasoning according to rules, which are given, no longer renewed in the infinitely integrating novelty of a spontaneous actuation of activity, is external activity, a working from without ; it is will, *arbitrium*, where every intrinsicity is more or less repressed, and is not operative in its value, at least as regards the question under consideration ; that is, it does not take possession of, nor make itself intimately operative in the latter. The real must be interpreted according to concepts which are activity, not according to concepts which are things. In the concepts which are things man is incomprehensive and absurd. In general the error begins when we make use of concepts, instead of being one with them ; when we think, so to say, *upon* concepts, instead of *in* them.

(4) External analogies should be distinguished from relationships *ex principio*.

The difference between generalisations and universals or essentials should be deeply felt.

It should be understood that the *essential* is a value quite different and greater, and logically more effective, than what is *externally* " *universal* " or *general*.

In these propositions, even in the last one taken by itself—no matter whether it be explicitly recognised, provided it is a living sensibility—there is the principle of countless intelligences of phænomena, there is intelligence in its highest value. What, then, is intelligence if not a sense of origin? If talent is, in part, an extrinsic operation, intelligence—and similarly genius and also talent,

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in that which does not characterise it, but yet forms its chief reality—is *to know the reality of the origin, the spiritual reality, and to be this origin and this reality.*

(5) Intelligence is consciousness of values. Hence want of feeling in the last resort translates itself into want of intelligence ; and between feeling and intelligence there is no such gap as is supposed in onesided, superficial and empty views.*

(6) Also the greediness of the form may prevent the thought from forming itself in a more comprehensive and just manner, in a more delicate and perfect integration, in all the deepest human motives, exigencies or concepts of the spirit.

(7) Although nature seems sometimes to exhaust herself in creating a living being of proud beauty and of lively, quick intelligence ; although sometimes intelligence affirms itself at the expense of other qualities : nevertheless, this onesided attitude will certainly injure the aim of intelligence itself, and this, not only for the above-named reasons. There is in intelligence an intrinsic honesty, which is a value of universality, and therefore continuity, earnestness, responsibility, objectivity and "impersonality." And the moral and intellectual natures of a man have an identity of principles such that it is impossible to exclude therefrom—yet always as a tendency, an effort, or vocation—a profound identification, through which a single virtue, a single intellectual and moral nature may have effect in both fields.

(8) Intelligence forms itself in the material of the expression ;

*V. *Principii di Etica*, § 68.

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it makes an infinite, a universal, an absolute of every point of the material gathered up ("identified");

it is an integrity in every intrinsicity of values and abstract forms, which the past conditions, but cannot give.

Every point of the material made into intelligence is:

(1) a stimulus (condition, supposed or inferred reality, external nature);

(2) an individuation (form, expression);

(3) an infinite identity (concept, intrinsicity).

The stimulus may be, for instance, the supposed plastic material, and it may be the material, also supposed, of the cerebral conditions: where that which is *supposed*, even if it be not properly known, is nevertheless *necessarily* supposed.

ORIGINALITY OF THOUGHT
AND ITS
PHYSIOLOGICAL CONDITIONS

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ORIGINALITY OF THOUGHT AND ITS PHYSIOLOGICAL CONDITIONS*

1.—The hypothesis of a similarity between matter, in so far as *material of expression*, and cerebral conditions, in so far as *material of any mental presentment*†, admits of wide application, and it is by its help that I here purpose to pursue my research, especially with a view to understand the relation between originality and material conditionality of thought.

How can the originality (i.e., liberty) of thought be reconciled with its (material) conditionality ?

I wish to state first my fundamental point of view. Consciousness, in all its content, not only in its abstract forms, but in all its values, in so far as it is a spiritual reality, in so far as it is *consciousness*, is original. It is a calling or vocation to be, to actuate itself, which always and essentially is *in question*. Yet at the same time it requires and appropriates to itself a perfect system of material conditions ; on the slightest change in these conditions the synthesis or moment of consciousness would be different, or it would not exist. *Ex parte materiae*, it is entirely conditioned, though not predetermined.—And, on the other hand, it is not unconditioned in the sense that it could be spiritually uncharacterised

*This note was written with the intention (which was afterwards not carried out) of laying it before the Psychological Congress inaugurated at Oxford on July 26th, 1923.

†Cf. above, Chap. III.

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and absolutely arbitrary, not conformable to its essence, to internal necessities, to intrinsic values and forms. Originality and internal necessity ("eternity" of values and forms) may not be sundered. A thought may not be; but when it *is* (however aroused and conditioned), it is original and in itself necessary, original and, in this sense, true.

Any exterior condition, however necessary and influential, cannot be really a cause, it cannot *constitute* thought. Values and forms may actuate or express themselves only *originally*, otherwise they lose that *value of actuation*, that value of *liberty* and of spiritual *necessity* which is thought's very reality. We have the material conditions; on the other hand we suppose, abstractly, an intrinsic necessity of values and forms: yet the value of actuation through which a spiritual necessity and integrity of values realises itself is not given; it is a cause.

I maintain that thought cannot by constraint cause another thought to come into being: the latter must be born by itself, its content must be original, in order to be valuable—with the peculiar value of thought and consciousness. The actual thought as such must die, in order that a new actuality may be operative and valuable, with that necessity which is the strong reality of thought, and which is one with its originality. Speaking more generally, life needs novelty; new births, absolutely new, in so far as they are life, spirit; and profound and final death is the only fertile sacrifice for the new offspring. Thought must forget itself in experience; then only observation is living, true, unimpaired. If we make an effort to follow a previously expressed thought, or if we depend upon rules or given criteria—and we do not assume the responsibility of a new judgment, i.e., not entirely derived—then

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originality of thought is lost, and, with it, its integrity and its strength.

What is actual remains as "the past," as material. But to be made again reality of thought, it must be essentially identified in the actuality of thought. And this can only take place through an originality and intrinsic character of values and forms.

For example, a mental presentment of pride and of love could not exist, and we could not understand or interpret an act of pride or of love, if activity were not originally and essentially a value of individuation and of universality; i.e., if it were not—to express the same principle in a most unspecified aspect—an *affirmation of being*, and on the other hand an *affirmation of being as something which is not exhausted in that particular affirmation*. Neither could it exist, if activity were not essentially and originally a taking shape (i.e., a "form," "presentment," "light..."). Nor, again, if there were not originally and essentially in it the idea of external condition and existence.

Values and forms actuate themselves—in infinite gradations and relations, specified, integrated, potentiated—in *the traces which they themselves have formed*. In a superficial view, these conditions are all. Yet they do not constitute thought (or consciousness). And he who considers the real stuff of which thought, and life, are made, sees in these conditions only the "second causes," however essential. In the value, as also in the genesis, and in the direct experience of thought, an original and intrinsic character, a self-necessity of values and forms constituting and guiding all development, is the chief reality—and the chief problem, both for philosophers and for psychologists (if we wish to keep to this distinction).

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An intrinsic character of values and forms is an immediate datum; it is not, or it is not exclusively—as constructive, abstract and exterior thought likes to put it—an hypostatized and transcendental reality. It is actual in every content of consciousness. The slightest content of consciousness, the slightest consciousness of activity, is already, for instance, a *totality*, a *simplicity*, a *light*, a *reality*, etc.; nor can we sunder any value (which is original and intimately final, not instrumental) from its value as a principle (see § 15).

2.—A few words of explanation are here necessary as to the meaning attached to the word “thought.” I use it in the widest acceptation (yet not as something which is not psychic, which is not known as consciousness and value). The separation between “thought,” “consciousness,” “feeling,” “sensation,” etc., belongs—in my opinion—to a false conception. For in those different manifestations of activity, the chief problems, the fundamental realities seem to be the same; and all the more, the more we keep to the essence of activity itself. Thus also it is justifiable, in my opinion, to extend the acceptation of “sensation” so as to comprehend every content of consciousness. Only I prefer the word “thought,” because it calls our attention to forms of activity where the spiritual reality is clearer, and where many problems may be faced, and more easily be made the subject-matter of introspection and philosophy. And in saying “thought” I have in mind not so much the constructive, “voluntary” thought, that relatively secondary control over thought within which is often confined the subject-matter of a onesided logic, but the poetic, creative, essentiating thought, which is the most active principle and fundamental reality not only in art, but also in

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science, not only in intimate knowledge, but also in that knowledge which concerns an alien object, and whose content chiefly is posited (hypostatized, abstractly acknowledged). Such use of the word "thought," and "to think," seems to me conformable to the use also of the highest minds and of the most accredited writers. So Shakespeare, who nevertheless is not a mystic, for instance, says (*Hamlet*, Act. I, Scene V. 121) : "...would heart of man once think it?"

3.—We may now closely investigate the relation between the originality of thought and its material element; and put in evidence the unity of spirit and matter, in some new respect.

The "intrinsic," or the "eternal," as considered outside time or as timeless, is an abstraction, and in so far as it is generally assumed to be a reality, it is a false hypothesis, a false expression. It is said that to be aware of change and time, a changeless and timeless "unity of apperception" must be pre-supposed.* In the first place it is a misleading conception, to suppose that synthesis—an *essential* identity in values and forms—is a thing principally to be deduced or postulated, or pre-supposed; on the contrary, we experience it immediately. It is a light, a responsibility, a love; it is to unify in the eternal; and, if we had but a glimmer of that consciousness of thought's reality, which should be necessary in all reflective knowledge, we should know it as the sustaining and constituting principle of thought, its infiniteness, a claim of universality, a simplicity, a transparency, a light, kindled, deepened, increased in every detail or extension;

*More exactly it should be specified that "a sense of change . . . transcends *that* change." V. George Santayana. *Scepticism and Animal Faith*, 1923, p. 161.

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a datum of consciousness. *Any essential word, in so far as essential and because essential*, is a synthesis : and this character of being essential is an immediate datum of consciousness (and every word is in some measure essential, universal). And having once gained this concrete consciousness of synthesis, we should regard it with greater wonder perhaps, but with less abstract, arbitrary and superstitious thought.—On the other hand, it seems to me in the last resort not the right attitude, if we refuse to consider that activity is time, even more essentially than from its being change : it is time, immediately, essentially because it is expectation, creation, actuation, struggle, effort, value, a longing, a questioning, a claim, etc.

This *essential* identity, in which we see every temporal and spatial multiplicity, is only actual, *acting*, in the "punctual" present—which has its cause in that actuality, nay, it is another name for that actuality ; this essential identity is only in the very act of identifying. And indeed it is not exact to represent that in process of change the spiritual identity, the permanent self, in so far as spiritual, endures, and that, by this enduring, the sense of change is possible. The physiological and physical conditions—these practically endure, or else their renewing is irrelevant for us : whereas the activity as a characterising, or essentiating and unifying agency, by which those materials are taken up again and renewed in their meaning and identified in a unique essence, in a spiritual integrity of values and relations, this simplicity of actual thought, that is, spirit as a principle of interiority, this does not endure, this exists only by renewing itself (always according to its eternal truth ; which nevertheless does not exist except in that renewing) ; it exists only in the very act of realising itself. The relatively permanent

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basis is material; and it is taken up again and again, renewed and transformed into the novelty or actuality, which is the lived through, possessed, intimately known—not merely inferred—reality.

4.—We perceive, I suppose, change and movement, so readily and strongly, in the first place for a fundamental spiritual reason. The principle of *essential* identity—which is the very spirit of spirit—finds in change the problem, the rough material: and in front of it, in order to *be*, in order to actuate its truth, its eternal or intrinsic nature, i.e., above all, in order to be again a totality, a transparency, an identification beyond every given limit, it has to form or actuate itself again, comprehending one element more. Through the problem its vocation, its very being, is kindled again.

Nevertheless—and this is the point I wish to emphasise—if we assert that the variation pre-supposes an identity, why should we not assert with equal right that the identity pre-supposes the different things to be identified? It does not indeed “pre-suppose” them, but there is between them an implication even more essential. If we look closely at the nature of this essential identity, we must say that without any *existent* to be identified we cannot conceive it at all. Identity needs an identified something; and *this cannot be found in activity, as original, as a cause, in activity as acting*. The “punctual” present, the conscious actuality, is only in acting, and cannot as such be grasped—unless we renounce its very character. And if we think that we are not allowed to go beyond this conscious present and to suppose in it something which does not exhaust its being in its conscious actuality, then this present can be neither the thing

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identified nor the identity, and cannot *be* at all.* To take thought away from its past work, and from all conditions, *qua* material for renewed synthesis, is a false abstraction ; nay, it is monstrous. Activity of thought needs absolutely something whose being is not, or is not entirely, in its conscious actuality. Without a material of actuation or presentation, thought could not *be*, because there could be no identification in the intrinsic necessity of values and abstract notions. The "eternal," this originality and intrinsic necessity of values and forms, in itself essentially temporal (as I hold), exists only in material conditions, needs essentially some material conditions whose existence is in some respect independent of the bare absolute conscious actuality of thought ; because otherwise it could not be a principle of identification, it could not be what in fact we find in it, the highest principle.

Hence we are right—I maintain—in not conceiving actuality of thought—nor any intrinsic, self-necessary, "eternal" character in it—outside more or less enduring conditions.

5.—Let us now come to more particular points and to some explicit application of that analogy to which I have made reference.

If there is a relation between what is called a conscious reaction, and the (external or internal) stimuli, similar to that between artistic thought and the material offered, i.e., the materials at our disposal, then we may correct some usual expressions and replace them with others which seem more exact and clear.

*On the other hand, also the "objective," in so far as it is thought, is activity, is acting. See above, § 84.

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We read of "the capacity of a [subject] being determined by the stimuli from within."* Now the stimuli do not determine the "conscious reaction," that is, in the sense of being their "*cause*." The material conditions do not *pre-determine* thought, they do not explain its actuality, they are not its cause ; nor are they, on the other hand, simply means ; still less a secondary element which we may neglect. They are *the material of mental presentment*. This is a point of great consequence, because, in the first case, if they really *determine* consciousness, i.e., the "effect," we are led to those doctrines which regard consciousness as an epiphænomenon ; if, on the other hand, they are merely a "means," or even an obscure thing which we may neglect, we are right in considering matter as unreal, and in renouncing an adequate study which goes closely into details in this world of our ; and all arbitrary theories satisfying our practical and ethical claims (except that of truth) may have free play.

A touch of colour that a painter puts on the canvas is not strictly speaking determined by the colours at his disposal. The colour which almost rushes towards him ; the colour which can be formed in a synthesis in whose inmost demand many and many other values are *identified* ; which can be taken up in a synthesis with the infinite conditions of the present being of the painter ; the colour in which he recognises himself, in which he finds himself at ease ; in which, and in which only, his thought finds expression : this colour is not the cause of his thought ; nor yet is it simply a means. It is more than a means—the means may be substituted without a necessary consequence in the effect, and we may conceive the means and the end as existing almost independently. And it is

*G. S. Brett, *A History of Psychology*, 1921, Vol. II., pp. 40-41.

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more than an occasion. It is just the material of the unequivocal thought.

It is said that "activity is conditioned by the operation of extensive things."* In reality only activity *operates*, not the extensive things.

The expression "conscious reaction" is also not perfectly adequate; it may convey the idea of activity as necessarily posterior to the material conditions, and the idea of *two* activities of the same kind.

It is said that "the order of procedure in time begins from the stimulus, and its consequence is sensation;"† that "every mental state has a nervous state for its antecedent."‡ May we say that a given colour is the *antecedent* of the touch of colour? or of the vision? Activity is undoubtedly essential in the choice of material conditions (see §. 10.) And we do not represent them adequately, if we speak of the stimuli as preceding. The matter, indeed, the infinite conditions, may precede.—On the other hand, we may not say that activity *conditions* their becoming stimuli; this would be equally equivocal. Activity is in actuation, and not before.

It is said that the feelings are "concomitants" of neural action, § or vice versa. The terms "concomitants," "antecedent" are also not adequate, if in this obscure world of neural conditions in thought's formation, or of neural action in connection with feeling, we try to gain some light from the concept of a value of actuation which is a principle of causality, and which needs the existent (i.e. the existing in time and space) for its very being.

It is said that the emotions are but the feelings of bodily

**Op. cit.*, p. 142.

†*Op. cit.*, p. 223.

‡*Op. cit.*, p. 142.

§*Op. cit.*, p. 169.

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changes. That they are the feelings of bodily changes (according to James)* is right, in so far as it is right that the painting is the vision. Sensations—as I strongly believe—are not the *ingredients* of higher expressions: they may be raised to express the highest feelings and values, very plainly and adequately, only because they have essentially the same nature as the latter, because there is—though sometimes the question is very difficult—one and the same principle in them. Of course, sensations, when they are directed to interpret the physical reality, are inadequate; then they are discredited, as they give rise to a qualitative realism which is ingenuous. But if taken in their immediate cognitive value, in their immediate qualitative and valuational meaning—for instance, light as sense of light, not as vibration—there is God in them. And this, for instance, is shown by painting which in light finds the objectivity and (relative) impersonality of reason and of love, i.e., a consciousness of activity as an eternal (intrinsic) origin. Feelings of bodily changes or other sensations *are* a moment of fear, or pride, of self-annihilation, or of love, yet only in so far as colours *are* the painting. The problem is not solved, of course; yet it seems to me that a step is made which helps to put it more clearly.

“Internal stimuli”—it would be better to call such postulated reality: “plastic material.” That would avoid the danger of mistaken conceptions, as that of a determinant stimulus, of a cause-stimulus, and of consciousness as an effect; also that of representing the synthesis, and the material of its actuation, as separable.

6.—There is no point in a painting to which a material element does not correspond. Similarly, it seems to me

*See G. S. Brett, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

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that if we have even the most fleeting image or shadow in our mind, the same implication of a material element must in all likelihood be recognised. The image reveals itself and at the same time finds and moulds to itself a plastic material ; it seals or moulds a material more or less retentive. The same thing happens also if I think of a numerical relation, e.g. $3.4=2.6$. Therefore it is, as it seems, that, when after some time I look again for that mental presentment, the latter is no longer equally difficult or new . . .

If I close my eyes and in my mental vision I see two stars, are those two imagined stars materially, i.e. spatially, external, the one in respect to the other ? The same analogy may help us in order to answer, in part, this difficult question. Two points in a picture, *qua* vision, are not external (the one in relation to the other). Diverse moments of expression are known or felt as diverse moments of the same activity (*essentially, intrinsically*, the same), and as such are recognised, identified, made transparent. Thought (or feeling or sense) unites by essentiatng, by deepening its own truth ; it unites in the inmost motives and values of life. The different moments are one, if viewed in a spiritual integrity of values. This unity is spirit, a principle of interiority ; an identification in values and forms as in themselves necessary (original, eternal) ; an identity, acting, powerful ; a simplicity—which is also an unexhaustible problem.

On the other hand, if we consider the picture *ex parte materiae*, we must say that this figure and that, in so far as they are matter, exist in space, the one external to the other. In the same way, if it is true that for any part of mental presentment there exists a plastic adequate element, the two stars in my imagination really take

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shape in a plastic material, and this is existent, extended, external, the one point in respect to the other. The distance between two stars in the sky, between two colours on the canvas, and between the material element in which the two distinct lights of my imagination find their condition, are not comparable. Yet the brain modifications are spatial, and there must be a distance, if only a micromillimetre : if it is true that there is a distance between two points of colour in the painting and if the same hypothetical, yet not arbitrary, analogy is true.

7.—The person who draws sees his white sheet of paper, sees his pencil, sees the touch of his pencil, etc. How, then, may that analogy hold ? Does a mental presentment find its material without seeing or feeling it ? In the first place, I observe, the way in which the artist finds the right stroke, instinctively and almost unawares, speaks more in favour of, than against, the truth of our thesis. *He is conscious* ; yet his consciousness, in its essence, has nothing voluntary, abstractly intentional : it is a spontaneous, original one ; it is the consciousness of the values of thought, and of life, which are consciousness because they are values, and because the fact of their being values or consciousness is the very cause of their being. This consciousness of his does not abstractly select ; it forms itself wherever actual presentments, though dim, may be recognised, and therefore called at the same time into a new synthesis, i.e., identified with a more or less deeply and widely conditioned self. The artist hardly considers that he has in his hand a pencil, and before him a white sheet of given dimensions. Nevertheless, his thought actuates itself in full adequacy with the means at his disposal ; it forms itself in different ways, according to the quality of the pencil and the size of the sheet. In this

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process we do not find, necessarily or essentially, that conscious voluntary control—to which many so wrongly confine knowledge, and thought, and consciousness: but there is in it that consciousness which occurs—as I hold—wherever there is originality, wherever there is activity.

But I shall speak further about the problem of choice later on. At present it is enough to point out that our hypothesis is not rendered unacceptable by the fact that in merely mental presentments we do not distinctly see the “plastic material” at our disposal, ere we summon it to express our idea.

Nor would it be possible, strictly speaking, to have on one side a thought (any glimpse of mental presentment or sentiency), and on the other side a material to select in order to express that thought: indeed, it would not be possible, in the last resort, for the very reason, that thought does not precede—even for a fraction of a second—the material in which alone it actuates itself, and without which it has no existence in any sense.

Is it, then, not true—it may be here also objected—that we see the material of the painting, while, on the other hand, we do not see the “plastic material” of mental presentment? But this does not state the problem well. I do not see the cerebral modifications: yet neither do I see the matter of the painting (colours *qua* vibrations, or chemical compounds, etc.). But if I am right in saying that I see the material of the painting, I can equally well say that I see the material of mental presentments.

Indeed, the fancies of my imagination are *materiated*, just as the painting, and the statue, and the structure of the architect; though in a material no less peculiar.

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8.—If it is true that every mental presentment has its physiological conditions, then there could be no feeling, no image, no idea of relations, if the world were not spatial. Also there could be no high ethical value, no love, no responsibility. Indeed, as I hold—these values do not exist except in their actuations, which—unquestionably—are spatial and temporal. For instance, responsibility* (or liberty, or pride, or love, or individuation, or unity, or universality, etc.) actuates itself in different centuries and places, and is recognisable, though it is always diverse; yet, according to all evidence, it has not, and also cannot have, any existence, of any kind, outside its actuations. The problem of a constancy, and an eternal novelty, of principles, is perhaps the most difficult in all philosophy However that may be, I think that matter is essentially necessary to activity, and that we are right in saying that activity exists only in it, i.e., in the “existent,” which means also co-existence, and succession. And this for many reasons: for, as I said, without these conditions, activity—supposing it possible—could not go out of its “punctual” present, nor find its identity (its universality); and, since it is essentially a principle of identification, we could not find it at all (see § 4). But, above all, I cannot conceive a mental presentment as sundered from its existence. To affirm that a mental vision exists only for the man who thinks it, and in no respect for other men; to affirm that it does not exist, as an event, for other men; to sunder its existence as an event, its genesis as an event, from the value of necessity or universality (another aspect of its very originality); all these views are nonsensical or onesided, and though they

*Also a form of identification of activity with reality, in the intrinsic, or eternal, of activity itself.

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belong to what are perhaps necessary, painful steps in philosophy, yet at bottom they are false.

9.—The painter not only awakens in the material at his disposal, he not only awakens in one material sooner and better than in another, but also he changes it, he moves it. What, then, of the material of mental presentments? Physiological conditions are not necessarily antecedent to the actuating or forming of a thought, which materialises itself in them . . . Yet (and this is of more consequence) is it true that thought not only awakes in them—and in that way exercises a certain choice among them—but also moulds them and inserts itself in the causality of matter? I can see nothing in that absurd or contradictory. Rather it would be strange if thought, which is a characterising agency, an imposing, dominating principle, which under so different and adverse conditions recovers and obstinately reasserts its qualities (e.g., unity, or totality, and universality, individuality, etc.), it would be strange, I say, if thought, which—we must not forget—is life, or a moment of life, could bring no change—as our hypothesis requires—into the most ductile material.

10.—(*On Choice*). Where a sound or a sign has a meaning for us, there our thought, our whole being comes, or better, awakes in a new synthesis. Yet, in order that choice may operate in this way, in order that consciousness may find, among a world of elements at its disposal, that one in which it may take shape and *be*, and especially in order that it may choose that element in which to be more intensely; in order that consciousness, or activity, may discover that material which has a meaning essentially kindred with the greatest and deepest part of its possibilities, it seems that a certain fervour or

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a light of consciousness, however dim, should be diffused as widely as possible over the material conditions. A painter chooses without hesitation a colour on his palette. Yet he takes a glance at the whole palette, where there are many colours. And in this connection—if we believe that artistic work is still the plastic work of nature, in its perpetually new origin ; if we fully realise the strength and value of this essential relation—then it does not appear arbitrary and shallow to suppose that something similar happens in the brain—which thus comes to be our palette. Activity, on this hypothesis, has made itself actual in a large field of conditions, which then already form material of mental presentment ; in which material, consciousness may be further called forth or shaped, according to essential kinships and original values and *schemata*.

To understand this better we must consider some points concerning choice. First, let us remember how much is, as it were, suspended, waiting for a (further) meaning, and relatively unconscious, in our thought. For example, when a word interests us (e.g., our own name), and it is pronounced at the end of a phrase, nevertheless it seems to be known from the very beginning of it. The other words were heard and retained a little while, almost only in their sonorous concept, and they were beginning to fade away ; but suddenly they become significant, and we seem to hear them only in connection with that meaning, and any preceding sense of them is forgotten. And the like always happens in discourse, when words take their meaning from what follows. Or it happens that almost a prescience of a thing, a general sense or concept of it, astonishes us, yet only when, afterwards, we know the object more explicitly.—But we must not rely too much on

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the relatively unconscious, in order to explain, for instance, how we ordinarily find and choose our words in common speech ; and the problem is, certainly, a very difficult one.

A second point is that we must free ourselves from very false views concerning this subject. It is always said that choice is a process of abstraction ; that it is to abstract, to neglect or omit details, to mutilate the datum, to combine elements ; all the concepts and words of constructive or " voluntary " thought are used, where any abstractive and constructive process is in the main secondary. Or, on the other hand, recourse is had to an " unconscious selection " (a most unintelligible expression !) Choice (or selection) is presented after the type of a practical intentional selection, where we discard and neglect what is useless and economise our means. Artistic choice never happens in this way ; and what belongs to artistic or poetic thought belongs to all thought—in whatever it has most operative and fertile, and constitutive of its reality. In the case of the painter, when he chooses a colour on the palette, or when he mingles colours in search of a new one, he would hardly reach his aim by a bare effort of disciplined will and by selective methods ; rather we see that he is following a certain direction, and that he stops when he finds himself, or his thought ; that is, when he finds himself or his thought as realised in the material, in other words, as expressed.

Another false conception depends also on the same attitude, namely, that many are able to pre-suppose things, few to see them. So we read of an " ego " which is the " pre-supposition " of " apperception." Only when there is that " ego " we have " self-consciousness." " Animals have not, strictly speaking, an ego ; neither

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have children ; nor drunken or dreaming men." " When there is not an opposition between the things and the ego, there is no judgment." It would be difficult to find falser conceptions. " There is in cognition a distinction between subject and object, which is not in sensations." But is not the discovery of a man of science an act of cognition ? And yet is it not true that in his discovery, in the very revelation of it, the man of science forgets, or may forget, himself ? The more alive the cognitive act is, all the more probable is it that he may forget himself in the new inter-relation of things which is revealed to him. The object, in so far as it is a term of thought, is activity, is an agent. The active principle is not only pre-supposed, it is the very content of consciousness ; and it is in every particular or individuation of things, in so far as these are thought or felt, in so far as they are a term of consciousness. We must beware of making the subject a separate entity, distinct from its actuation in things, in experience, " free " with a void meaningless freedom. Activity, which is essentially a unifying principle, is everywhere where there is a beginning of consciousness. Thus a sensation *unites* (it does not *associate* itself) with new elements in a wider and stronger experience : it unites, for instance, in a sense of being—and of resistance, and of reality, etc.—which is not confined to its particular being.—And choice, or selection, is not a matter of economy, as some maintain ; economy is not its leading principle. We must find the cause of choice in essential affinities and in the immediate value of any essential characteristic. Choice is, in the first place, *identification*. We *unite* different conditions, in our sense of life, *qua* essential, i.e. intrinsic, " eternal," identical with itself in more than one

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actuation.* We must also consider that to add one more element of matter to the unity of intelligibility, to comprehend one more element in our truth and in our responsibility, this is the very vocation of spirit ; it is its value of necessity or universality.

II.—(*On Realism in Art*). Thought cannot be, except by materialising itself. On the other hand, matter *qua* perceived, or imagined, is thought or activity, and has thought's great value. The "realistic" painter is well aware of this. Every detail, in the act of our discovering it, is at one and the same time matter, and thought. To deepen matter, is to deepen thought. Thought itself is realistic ; it forms itself in the core of matter. To look

*However fundamental, this notion seems not to be recognised. See J. Ward, *The Encyclopædia Britannica* (11th ed., 1910-11), "Psychology," § 37. General Character and Growth of Intellection : "In all the arts of life, in the growth of language and institutions, in scientific explanation, and even in the speculations of philosophy, we may remark a steady simplification in the steps to a given end or conclusion, or—what is for our present inquiry the same thing—the attainment of better results with the same means." This explanation is strangely inadequate. Consider any remarkable passage where we find vivacity and depth of language. An expression is full of meaning and has a wide, almost prophetic comprehension, because it has gone deep at one and the same time into things and into the integrity of the spirit, i.e. in intrinsic values and forms of activity ; because it is essential, and because to be essential—i.e. to comprehend widely reality in the intrinsic values and forms of thought—is an immediate value. Above all, this value of truth—i.e. this identification in an infinite originality and intrinsic necessity of thought's values and forms—and not economy, is the cause of any concentration of language. How many things, which nevertheless represent a greater economy of means, have too different a value from that of any concentration of thought and life in language and art or practical activity . . . We cannot think that the principle of economy of means has ever made the language of our poets condensed and comprehensive, or a poem, a statue, a prophecy, a speech pregnant with meaning ; and we are led to that explanation even less, after recognising that value of essential identity—which in fact we must everywhere not only assume, but which we directly experience. Economy of means is rather a consequence of that will or vocation to concentrate or unite in a moment of life the infinite life. (A task which is perhaps not conformable to the ends of economy).

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for and to welcome new rough material, new problems : that is the artist's first step. The second step is to see all things distinctly again, without ambiguity, without obscurity, and this, not by omitting or excluding what is obscure, but by deepening thought itself, or research in the material. Thought itself, or the material? He knows not ; we know not. He realises, takes up from the blind abyss reality, as much as he can. Indeed, *realising* is his true *cause* (cause and aim), and not reality ; nevertheless, he must think of the object as his true aim. Yet the more he is a realist, all the more he is an idealist. He realises matter, and in that very act he realises value and forms of thought—for example a sense of light, the sense of an infinite originality, freedom (in the deep of the cloudless sky, which takes from activity's essential values its meaning, its very hue), and divisibility, conditionality, mere existence (in so far as the mere " this " can be qualified by thought . . .), etc. He must look for the object, yet the value of the painting is in the value of thought, in thought's reality. And this reality is there, according as *objectivity* depends on a certain virginal freshness in the observation of details, in our being born in them, without preconceptions, and at the same time on a demand for truth, and a presence of the whole in each detail . . . ; or, on the other hand, this reality is more or less wanting, when the meagre thought leans upon *schemata*, already formed and kept in view, and which are not immersed in the purifying, almost Lethean originality of the spirit, and upon points of reference and characteristics extrinsically selected, according to recognised necessities and well-founded convenience, but not called forth and chosen out by essential relationships, by the overpowering necessity of the concept and of art ; and when thought is

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led painfully from without by a powerless intention (powerless in the main respect)—the intention of reproducing photographically the object.

Yet, in so far as the detail is really seen, we find therein that value of actuation, that originality of thought actuating itself ; and in it the value of thought is actual.

Why is a line, in so far as it is vision, full of necessity ? (indeed, there is no sign, which being thought, by the act of thinking, is not full of necessity). This is because every sign is drawn as infinitely true : because thought in its actual reality, in its reality of thought, is original ; and original means also self-necessary, " eternal."

And this originality finds no hindrance in the material details. The painter realises in matter his liberty ; he realises in it his thought. And the more he enters into the details, the more he finds his liberty, i.e., this originality of thought.—To return to the analogy between material of expression, and cerebral modifications, if we think it true, we understand better how these modifications, these material conditions, do not contradict or collide with liberty, or originality ; nay, they actuate it, or, to speak more exactly, they are essential to its actuation.

The more realistic a man is, the more he is an idealist ; and this, for many reasons. The follower of realism, who puts aside poor, abstract ideal constructions, and with unprejudiced mind faces reality, finds (as I have said) in a greater degree the originality of spirit, the ideal reality, the truth of activity itself. In the second place, the very spirit of realism is the most ideal ; for its function is to assume new problems, to penetrate into details and difficulties, to take account even of the hardest truths, to reach a larger unity and concentration, to realise more

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widely the claim (i.e., the very reality) of truth, and of responsibility. And in a more general aspect, it must be said that a strong faith in the particular (in the individual, exclusive, absolutely heterogeneous, or sharply specified) may be a condition, even in one and the same thought, for the light of greater conciliations and loves, and essential unities.

12.—Thought, like “external sensation,” like artistic work, is always an “experience”—if a (supposed) plastic material is absolutely *material* to its being. This word “experience” may be with less right restricted to mean “external experience” . . .

13.—Many more examples, and developments, of the same concept are possible. Concerning practical activity, the applications of science, in so far as they are considered as means for the attainment of aims, from the economic point of view, in reference to the particular advantages they bring, often do not explain our expectation; yet as *material of actuation*, in which the activity of the individual realises itself in new “concentrations”—which may be likened to those of memory—in new possibilities and responsibilities, they are immediately, in so far as lived, a spiritual reality.*

14.—Here however it is not out of place to observe that, between physiological conditions and the infinite physical conditions outside the animal body there is an immense difference; that it is a want of close scientific adherence in the particular, and it is to abandon one’s self to empty and arbitrary hypotheses, to assert that the self, being not confined within exact limits, may be so extended as to embrace the whole world, and that it may be located where we like. The physiological conditions have too

*Cf. H. Bergson, *L’évolution créatrice*, 8th ed. (1911), p. 199.

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prominent a value of their own. And because it is necessary to state facts that are obvious, I say that if you take things away from me, that is not the same as if you take away my eyes. Activity of the individual in common enterprise or in the universal of knowledge may rise to a value of necessity, of (relative) impersonality, and universality, so that the individual in his particularity almost disappears. It is this value of universality, imperfectly known, which leads to such misleading conceptions. The individual is no less essential—and even more real—when he is deeply renewed, taken up, transformed into a collective will, or into a thought of humility, than when he is born anew in a thought of truth, or in the revelation of the artist, or in any act of responsibility, which clearly involves our bodily, temporal and spatial existence.

15.—The knowledge of a principle of causation, also in internal experience, is perhaps generally denied, or not recognised ; I mean the knowledge of a cause as a constitutive principle, not as merely a principle of co-ordination, of phænomena. W. Windelband says that as we do not know the true cause in the passing of a movement from one object to another, in like manner we do not know the cause in the passing from a thought or a will to its actuation or execution, and from one moment of thought to another.* L. Brunschvicg quotes Malebranche and Hume, both of whom searched for a cause in internal experience.† The latter do not consider any real knowledge of a cause to be possible—do not find a single example in which a power or operating principle is manifested to us ; and Brunschvicg seems to subscribe to a

*W. Windelband, *Einleitung in die Philosophie*, 1914, p. 178.

†L. Brunschvicg, *L'expérience humaine et la causalité physique*, 1922, pp. 11-16.

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like negative result. All will, all effort, in order to move an arm, or to evoke a mental presentment, if we consider it closely, is ineffective. This conclusion depends—as I believe—on the fact that even in this connection we look for the cause as something antecedent. The cause—a value of actuation—in order to be a cause must be operative to the extreme limit of the execution of an act: nay, it is a cause only in so far as it is the acting principle and the value of the actuation or expression: really *the actuation itself is the cause*.

To summarise some points:—there is an originality, which is a *value of actuation*; a value of liberty and at the same point a value of necessity. The act of thought is *free* and (spiritually) *necessary*. In the same way, for example, as we are right both in saying that “thought is free” and “that we cannot alter the course of thought by a hair’s breadth” (Bosanquet). The content of consciousness, as such, in whatever material it may be formed or expressed, however excited, occasioned, conditioned, suggested, and however spontaneous, in so far as it realises itself, is entirely true to its nature, in itself necessary, full of intrinsic character, “eternal” (for instance, it is expression, intuitive value, individuation, universality or spiritual necessity, totality, etc.). And if we consider spontaneity as in itself *extra legem*, capricious, arbitrary, “a-logical” we almost lose the fruit of all philosophical thought.—On the other hand, we must not represent this same intrinsic character as if it were only pre-supposed, and not a datum of consciousness; nor may we confine it to abstract relations and formal categories of thought.—Also to regard this intrinsic character as “existing outside time,” or as “timeless,” is arbitrary. Expression is in the song of the skylark and in the dis-

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course of man (expression, I mean, as a principle) ; yet am I then to hypostatise expression outside time, or as timeless ? As I have said above, the problem of a constancy of principles is immense, yet we should not, in dealing with it, lose prudence and scientific discretion. —I call the intrinsic “ eternal ” because the latter word less misrepresents the value which is proper to an act of consciousness, to a mental presentment, when it is considered, possessed and lived through, not as a means to a transient end, however valuable, but as in itself a principle actually pregnant with infinite possibilities of being. —Whatever is lived through intensely is an infinite of identification, an infinite of possible actuations. What is intimate, essential, universal, *what is universal because it is intimate*, has an immediate value. We often recognise, in its immediate value, what is essential, and what, on the contrary, is only general.—Now, this originality, which is full of intrinsic character, ought to be the object of the studies of psychologists. Without it, how is thought to be comprehended ? for example, the genesis of a thought ? How are we to understand it as a value and as an agency ? How can we understand, without this intrinsic character present in it, I do not say any comprehensive and almost prophetic truth—but memory, and expectation and any act of recognition, or dreams, or any spontaneity of thought ?

16.—In the preceding pages I have pointed out, in many places, what I think are onesided and false attitudes, not so much in order to emphasise the truth which I defend, but because some errors are deeply rooted in our lower nature, and need to be opposed ; and because I believe that those conceptions, which disintegrate reality, turn aside from philosophy many gifted and fruitful

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minds whose collaboration would perhaps change the position and efficiency of philosophy.

17.—I hope this note is not useless, if it emphasises two points. Our efforts ought to be directed in this sense : to penetrate into the details of phænomena, and at the same time not to lose sight of the Deity. But this is just what is generally lacking in criticism, where hardly ever the greatness of a thing or of a man is explained, or translated into discursive thought. If we are not presented with merely technical problems, either the material is considered and illustrated with descriptions which might be applied to any sort of material ; or else we read about feelings of practical and ethical life *not working, as thus specified, in that material*, and about the soul and the divine nature of art in general. Consciousness of thought's reality is generally lacking in any criticism and in any reflective thought concerning art and life. Thought is not seen ; it is supposed as instrumental to life, it is not conceived as a moment of life, in which we may find the active principles of life ; not as a fulness and depth, a terrible vocation to realise and concentrate reality into one moment of wonderful simplicity. By viewing the reality of thought more closely we are led to see it as the acting subject in the minutest details of the material, as presented in consciousness ; operative there with the absoluteness and the faith of spirit. This is one point ; the other is that the distinction between the *psychogenetic* and the *transcendental* aspect of thought is not grounded, and cannot sunder the psychologist and the philosopher. No psychology is possible which does not take account of the *originality* of thought.

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